

HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SECOND
ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT OF
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
1997



Published by
THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, ADYAR
CHENNAI 600 020, INDIA



THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

President : Mrs RADHA BURNIER

Phone: (044) 4912474

Cables: OLCOTT, Madras

Secretary's Office

Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India

25 May 1998

To all General Council Members

Dear Colleague,

Correction

Due to an oversight on our part, in the General Council Minutes of the Meeting held on 25.12.97 at Adyar there was an error in Item 2 (d) ('World Congress, Sydney, 2001), where it was stated: 'It was decided to open the Congress on the evening of 1 January...' This should read 'on the evening of 12 January...'. The error is regretted, and will be corrected in transcribing the minutes into the General Council Minutes Book.

With warm good wishes from Adyar,

Cordially,

Mary Anderson
for Conrad Jamieson
International Secretary

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Presidential Address, 1997	1
Treasurer's Report 1996-97	14
Headquarters:	
Officers and Heads of Departments for 1997	27
Summary of Statistics, 1997	28
The Theosophical Publishing House	29
The Adyar Library and Research Centre	29
The School of the Wisdom	30
Archives and Museum	31
Olcott Education Society	31
The Theosophical Order of Service	33
Reports of General Secretaries:	
Africa, East and Central	37
Africa, Southern	37
Africa, West	38
Argentina	38
Australia	39
Austria	39
Belgium	39
Brazil	40
Chile	40
Colombia	41
Cuba	41
England	41
Finland	42
France	42
Germany	43
Greece	43
Iceland	44
India	44
Indonesia	45
Italy	46
Mexico	46
Netherlands	47
New Zealand	47
Norway	48
Philippines	48
Portugal	49
Puerto Rico	49

Reports of General Secretaries (Contd.)

Spain	. . . . .	49
Sri Lanka	. . . . .	50
Sweden	. . . . .	50
Switzerland	. . . . .	50
United States of America	. . . . .	51
Uruguay	. . . . .	52

Reports of Regional Secretaries:

America, Central	. . . . .	52
Canada	. . . . .	52
Ireland, Northern	. . . . .	53
Ivory Coast	. . . . .	53
Scotland	. . . . .	53
Slovenia	. . . . .	54
Togo	. . . . .	54
Wales	. . . . .	54

Reports of Presidential Representatives:

Asia, South-East	. . . . .	55
Bolivia	. . . . .	55
Costa Rica	. . . . .	56
Denmark	. . . . .	56
Hungary	. . . . .	56
Ireland, Republic of	. . . . .	57
Pakistan	. . . . .	57
Peru	. . . . .	57
Russia	. . . . .	58
Venezuela	. . . . .	58

Reports of Federations:

European Federation	. . . . .	59
Indo-Pacific Federation	. . . . .	59
Inter-American Federation	. . . . .	60

Reports of Lodges attached to Adyar:

Bangladesh	. . . . .	60
Israel	60
Japan	61
Korea	61

Directory	64
-----------	-----------	----

Minutes of the General Council	67
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Presidential Address

To the 122nd Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society, Adyar,
26 December 1997

It gives me much happiness to welcome all the delegates to the 122nd Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society, and to wish them a joyous and inspiring stay at Adyar. At a Convention like this, we have the opportunity to become more deeply conscious than at other times of the global character of the Society and of the privilege that we enjoy in sharing in some part of its work. Before we go on to other matters, let us quieten ourselves and invoke the blessing of the great Teachers who are constantly sending out streams of influence to help the peoples of the world to realize the unbreakable unity which is their salvation.

May Those who are the embodiments of Love immortal bless with Their help and guidance this Society, founded to be a channel for Their work. May They inspire it with Their wisdom, strengthen it with Their power, and energize it with Their activity.

Only a short time is left before the new millennium begins. There is no magic in the number 2000, which has acquired importance because of the world's familiarity with the Christian era and calendar. But it is as good an occasion as any to ponder over how we should proceed into the future, and what the Theosophical Society and its members can contribute to the world to help it onward towards its superhuman destiny.

Values degenerate and selfishness increases in Kali Yuga, the dark age in which we live. It confronts us with unprecedented challenges and at the same time offers extraordinary opportunity, for every challenge is an opportunity. One aspect of the challenge is that external conditions are changing very rapidly, but human psychology remains unregenerate. Our present age should not be remembered

by future generations only as an age of material advancement; energies which kindle people's deeper nature and aspiration to truth must flow into it. What we now call progress is not meaningful from the higher evolutionary point of view, because values which are timeless such as compassion, truth and beauty do not illuminate humanity's collective consciousness. Therefore, members of the Theosophical Society must infuse that consciousness with a new ethic and an elevating view of life.

Very few questions are asked when applications are made for admission into the Theosophical Society. The fees paid are relatively low. Therefore people may and do join the Society without much reflection, and drop out without any qualms, unaware of the significance of membership. That significance is felt only when there is

awareness of being part of a worldwide thrust to break through the bonds and illusions which shackle the mind and prevent it from soaring towards the divine sphere. Our responsibility as members is to live lives in which the immortal values manifest themselves so brightly that people are attracted, and enquire about the philosophy on which our lives are based. If our lives do not exemplify the values necessary for human progress, all about which we talk and discuss will be as chaff to the hungry.

In the *Bhagavadgita* the question is raised: 'What is the sage like? How does he behave?' Shall we ask ourselves 'What is a true member of the Theosophical Society like? How does such a person behave? Are there marks by which a member of the Society can be recognized?' I wish to make a few suggestions, which I hope will encourage others to explore what a member needs to be in order to fulfil his or her share in our Society's responsibility to take humanity forward.

It seems to me that a real member of the Society must have a magnanimous heart and a largeness of outlook which is not affected by differences or opposition. It is relatively easy to act with understanding towards those who are congenial to us and who see eye to eye with us. But the real member is one who educates himself to appreciate people who are unlike himself, whose approach to questions about life is different from his. Such a member is always prepared to examine with genuine interest what is of value in

opposing points of view, in an entirely different culture or state of mind.

Should not a true member be one in whom there are few or no internal barriers, who keeps the doors of the mind open to communicate and even to commune? Communication is a two-way movement. It is a readiness to give and receive — to give attention, appreciation, affection; to receive the true and the good even when they take unfamiliar forms and come from unexpected sources. It means willingness to listen, even when one cannot understand fully. It implies the courage to discard habits acquired through fear of the unfamiliar.

A real member of the Theosophical Society is one who never meets a stranger, except in the physical sense. Words like stranger, alien, opponent must not be part of his mental vocabulary. It is not enough to put on an outward air of friendliness and sympathy towards all. The aim should be to wipe out internal barriers. The inner condition must be seen for what it is, and values that are proclaimed must be put to the test in the course of the member's daily life.

Another mark of the earnest and committed member is the spirit of investigations, the questioning of preconceptions in order to go deeper. This means not settling down into a comfortable position; not taking any part of one's present understanding for granted, for there could always be other angles or a subtler understanding. Words and thoughts crystallize perceptions. We are so used to being entangled in words and thoughts that it is hard to realize that

consciousness, which should be a clear stream of awareness flowing like a river whose waters remain pure because it is flowing, stagnates, as it is heavy with memories and petrified experiences.

A child's mind is joyful, alive with interest and wonder, because there are innumerable things to observe and discover. Unfortunately, growing up becomes synonymous with falling into the illusion that one has understood. To the theosophical student, which every member ought to be, life should never be stale. He should be aware that all around are the subtle and mysterious depths of life; and as life's unseen aspects, its wonder, are beyond the mind's reach, he takes care not to fall into a stupor of confidence in his own knowledge. The one thing he knows is that there is always the new and the unknown challenging one to respond sensitively and adequately.

Another mark of a member is wholeness and inner integrity. This means much more than merely abstaining from devious conduct, which of course is essential. Integrity lies in learning to be true to oneself. The Society's motto is 'There is No Religion Higher than Truth'. Truth is hidden in every expression of life; it is within each of us. The earnest member learns to be attentive and to find within himself the centre from which he cannot err. He remains faithful to the voice of the higher self, the conscience that speaks of his own divinity.

We all know that conceit, harshness, unkindness are not right,

but habit is compulsive and a conceited attitude may overpower the mind before we are conscious of it. Being true to oneself means that when such a thing happens, one must look squarely at the fact. This seeing of what is, is like focusing light through a glass to burn up impurity. There is no integrity when we do not care to confront what is within, but on the other hand find justifications or indulge in distraction. Inner integrity is the act of self-knowing, it is absence of contradiction within oneself, it is the burning of the impure self. Ultimately it is self-extinction, nirvana.

If every member were to put energy into being true within, it would have a strong effect on the collective consciousness of humanity. The *Bhagavadgita* lists in chapter 16 the characteristics of a spiritual person, which include complete straightforwardness, a strict rectitude in relationship. If this were our aim, Lodges would consist of members who are harmonious and trustful of each other, and embody trustworthiness in the eyes of the public.

The ethical standards of members of our Society must be of the highest order, and include relationships with human as well as non-human beings. In the family, in professional life, in all circumstances, do we allow selfishness to prevail, or do we follow the ideal of an absolutely clean life and upright behaviour? Do we take care not to be part of the clientele for the countless products which involve cruelty and slaughter? It is easy to imagine that the few eggs one buys will make no difference to the world market, and

therefore we need not bother whether they come from battery hens or free-range farms. But an ethical life demands mindfulness in the details of daily living, being true to principles such as harmlessness. When the world looks at members of the Society, it must find clear guidance.

These three points, briefly elaborated, reflect in our daily lives our commitment to the Objects of the Society. There can be no brotherhood without large-heartedness; no study in the absence of a spirit of investigation; no self-knowing which is not based on complete integrity. If the Society is to be a force to usher in a new world, which is more important than ushering in a new millennium, there must be a correspondence between the Objects of the Society and the way members live their lives.

Our Society is spread over all the continents of the earth. It is represented in over seventy countries. Yet, sad to say, the number of members in most of these countries is small. We know that the influence of the Society extends far beyond its membership. Nevertheless, it is necessary to have a strong membership in order to promote the Objects of the Society, and organize meetings, studies and other activities necessary for the furthering of the Objects, all of which is possible only by co-ordinated effort. In unity is strength.

There are only five countries where the membership is above 1,000, and another five where it is between 500 thousand. The Indian Section is the only one with more than 10,000

members. There has been a dramatic increase in its membership during the last year—an increase of 1,138, a figure which surpasses the total number of members in most other countries, which is anywhere from 30 or 40 to a few hundred. The number of members in India on 30 September last was 11,939, which is a little more than one third of the total membership of the entire Society. As mentioned in my address last year, the American Section is the next strongest, with 4,078 members. The total membership of the Society now is 30,077.

I believe we should not fall into either of two extremes—the extreme of indifference to membership figures on the one hand, and on the other anxiety to acquire members. There is a middle path which we must follow. There might be a natural relationship between our capacity to present effectively the great ideals of Theosophy and the importance of the Society as a means of leavening world thought on the one hand and the number of members on the other. If our work and words have vitality, the people who come into contact with the Society will realize its potential to regenerate the world. They will be moved by its ideals and aims, which are fundamental for human happiness and advancement, and at least some will be inspired to commit themselves to its work. Obviously the work of the Society can be done only by those who are in it and feel committed to it.

As I mentioned in my address last year, it is essential to keep inspiration alive within us. Then only will the Society's work appear to those who

enter it to be significant. A theosophical group may be small, but if it is composed of members who are deeply committed to world welfare and who are alive with inspiration because they have obtained insights into the significance and extraordinary beauty of life, people who come into contact with the group will not go away disappointed, or with a feeling that this is just one of many societies with commonplace aims. The large number of lapsings almost everywhere must urge us to examine why people do not feel more enthusiastic after joining the Society.

Fortunately, there is no overall decline in membership this year. In East and Central Africa there is a considerable drop which, according to their assessment, is due to the emigration of the Indians who largely compose the Section's membership. In New Zealand and England also there is a noticeable downward trend.

There are 444 Lodges and centres spread over the sub-continent of India. Needless to say, they are not all equally energetic or effective in presenting Theosophy or informing the public about the value of the Society's objects. Yet, we can appreciate the fact that there are so many nuclei across the country.

The 150th birth anniversary of Annie Besant was commemorated with noteworthy functions at the international headquarters and the Indian Section headquarters at Varanasi. On 1 October the former President of India, Mr R. Venkataraman, addressed a large gathering at Adyar consisting of

residents, visitors and a number of boy and girl scouts. Two important Indian newspapers, *The Hindu* and *The Indian Express*, and also several magazines carried articles about her public work and eminence as a moral force. In Varanasi, Prof. D.N. Chaturvedi, former Vice-Chancellor of Kashi Vidya Peeth, a well-known institute of learning, and Prof P. Krishna, Rector of the Krishnamurti Foundation's Education Centre at Varanasi, addressed the audience.

As usual, the General Secretary and national lecturers visited Lodges and spoke to members and the public, and a number of study camps and conferences were held. Translation and publication of books into Indian languages is a continuing activity, as is the publication of the Section's journal which is sent to more than 5,000 English-speaking members. This is supplemented by the vernacular theosophical journals which are distributed in the respective areas.

In neighbouring Sri Lanka, there is much work still to be done in the Section, which is as yet far from strong. Activity continues to be centred in the capital city of Colombo, and elsewhere Lodges function irregularly. The President of the Indo-Pacific Federation, Mr Vicente Hao Chin, helped the Section with planning sessions during his visit in August. A five-year programme has been drafted to strengthen existing Lodges, enlarge membership, address the public, mobilize financial resources and improve administration, including the library, bookshop, and publicity. The General Secretary, Mr Melwin

Herath, hopes that their efforts will result in the Sri Lankan Section regaining its original influential role in national life.

The Karachi Lodge in Pakistan celebrated its centenary with programmes which made the Theosophical Society's existence more widely known. Lectures are attracting better audiences, and the fine building of the TS is being renovated with support from many friends. The Theosophical Order of Service is quite active in the country and helps to bring sympathy to the Society.

At the other end of the Indian subcontinent, in Bangladesh, two Lodges are active and our contact with them has improved. The Presidential Representative for South-East Asia, Dr C. V. Agarwal, reports all-round progress in the area. The Lodges in Malaysia are regularly conducting studies and recently organized the Indo-Pacific Conference at Kuala Lumpur where Miss Joy Mills and myself were the chief speakers.

The President of the Indo-Pacific Federation also visited Indonesia and conducted a two-day seminar on Self-Transformation, which was the main feature of the Section's annual gathering, with forty-three participants. Copies of *An Approach to the Secret Doctrine* were distributed to the Lodges and study groups. Nippon Lodge in Tokyo is meeting regularly and young members are taking an active part, and Osaka Lodge has acquired a meeting place. Publication work is proceeding.

Across the Pacific, the Canadian Federation is making steady progress.

Miss Joy Mills paid a visit there and led a workshop on 'Meditation and Discipleship'. In the United States, the annual meeting and summer school were important events, with a number of interesting lectures. The Fieldwork Department arranged 104 programmes which drew an estimated total audience of 4,680. Dr John Algeo, the National President, reports that the Young Theosophist movement has been reborn with an active group at Olcott, the National Headquarters. *Quest* magazine now appears once a quarter as a special issue attractive to the public, with eight other issues containing material of interest mainly to members, with studies in Theosophy. In addition, the Section publishes an irregular newsletter called *The Messenger*. Sales of *Quest* books have registered an increase and some of them have been prize-winners.

In Mexico, Mr Alfredo Puig, Vice General Secretary of the Brazilian Section, conducted a course on the *Bhagavadgita* in spring, and later there was a summer school in that Section on 'What is Theosophy?'. The General Secretary of the Puerto Rican Section reports that a work plan for the coming year has been formulated; they intend to make Theosophy much more widely known. As in previous years, help has been extended to members in the Dominican Republic and they look forward to establishing a second Lodge in Dominica.

In Cuba, work is mainly in Havana, where well-attended meetings regularly take place both for members and for the public. The public meetings include subjects which are likely to

interest everyone, such as 'Children's Education', 'Vegetarianism', and 'The Essence of the Religions'. The Lodges in Costa Rica, which are all in the capital of San Jose, are now organized as a Presidential Agency. During the centenary celebration of the School of Fine Arts in the University of Costa Rica, there was a display of oil portraits of HPB, C.W. Leadbeater, and J. Krishnamurti painted by Tomas Povedano, who was the founder of the Theosophical Society in Costa Rica and of its Virya Lodge.

The members in Venezuela received the benefit of a visit from Mr Alfredo Puig. Lectures were held in several cities where they hope to establish study groups. In Bogota, Colombia, there are lectures every Sunday in the Lodge premises, and also workshops and other activities such as the sale of books and the distribution of articles on Theosophy in Spanish.

Mr Puig also visited Peru where there are only forty members at present but the work is carried on with zeal. A new group was formed outside Lima in the town of Miraflores. Bolivia is a Presidential Agency with a small membership. They have benefited from visits by several experienced members from both Argentina and Brazil. Study of Theosophical books, running a library and bookshop and social service are part of their regular activities.

The Uruguayan Section has started issuing a newsletter and makes regular radio broadcasts. In Argentina, several new publications were brought out including *The Principles of Theosophical Work* by Dr Taimni. They

are interested in developing a Theosophical Science Centre. The Chilean Section lost a devoted worker in the person of Mr Ramirez Lohaus, their General Secretary. They are in close contact with Argentina and have Lodges at Santiago and Valparaiso.

One of the activities of the Brazilian Section is running the School of Theosophy on the campus of their institute in Brasilia. They also organize regional gatherings for different areas of this huge country. Much publication work goes on. Among the books brought out in Portuguese in 1997 were the biography of HPB by Sylvia Cranston and Dr Taimni's *Self-Culture*.

Let us turn now to Africa. The Headquarters building constructed recently in Accra, Ghana, is open to inquirers from Monday through Friday and has attracted many people, including students and visitors from neighbouring countries. Weekly meetings are held there, as well as training sessions and other programmes. In spite of very insecure conditions, the Lodges and Centres in Nigeria continue to work. After the return of peace, it was possible to send some books and leaflets to Slater Lodge in Liberia. Government policy makes it difficult to hold meetings in Cameroon. The Lodges in the Ivory Coast and in Togo have now been constituted into two separate regional associations. In the Ivory Coast, a public meeting was held when the newly elected Organizing Secretary, Mr Mebiana, passed away unexpectedly. The Headquarters of the Union of French-speaking Theosophists in

Africa is in Togo. In both these countries, economic conditions seem to make it difficult for members to pay their dues.

In South Africa, the hundredth anniversary of Johannesburg Lodge will be celebrated in April, when the annual convention of the Section is held there. The General Secretary participated in the East and Central African convention held in Dar-es-Salaam. He also visited the Lodge in Harare, Zimbabwe. The Section lost its oldest member and former General Secretary, Mrs Lily Membrey, who was a pillar of the work. In East Africa regular meetings take place in a few Lodges only. As usual, the national lecturer addressed students in educational institutions. The Theosophical Order of Service is active in the area.

The Australian Section's National President, Mrs Beverly Champion, travelled across the country and also lectured in Pakistan and in Kuala Lumpur. The venue and other details of the forthcoming World Congress to be held in Sydney in the year 2001 are being worked out. The Section looks forward to having ample representation from all over the world. In neighbouring New Zealand, HPB Lodge in Auckland has established itself in its newly constructed home next to the national headquarters, named Vasanta House. The General Secretary conducted a training seminar entitled 'Theosophy — A Way of Life' in Palmerston North as well as in Auckland. He and the National Vice-President and several others spoke at almost all the Lodges, yet the

number of members has dropped significantly. Among those who passed away during the year were three former General Secretaries, Mr Brian Dunningham, Mrs Sandra Hodson and Mr Bill Johnstone. Two other stalwarts from New Zealand no longer on the physical plane are Mrs Muriel Harding and Mr Stuart Nicholls, who was International Treasurer for a time and lived with his wife at Adyar.

There are activities throughout the year at the English Section Headquarters in London. The year's visiting lecturers included the International President, Dr John Algeo and Miss Joy Mills. In June, the subject of 'Modern Science and Esoteric Philosophy' was discussed during the Theosophy Science Conference. The English summer school held in August also focused on 'Theosophy, Science and the Ancient Wisdom'. The work in Scotland is progressing well since it became a Regional Association. The two Lodges in Wales have suffered a drop in membership.

Mrs Helen Gething was a welcome guest in Northern Ireland as well as in the Irish Republic. On my behalf she presented the Subba Rao Medal to Dr Hugh Shearman through his son in recognition of Dr Shearman's distinguished contributions to theosophical literature. Dr Shearman himself was unable to receive the award in person due to his failing health. In spite of extremely difficult conditions, talks, meetings, and studies go on steadily in Belfast. In Dublin too there have been difficulties, but work goes on.

The Icelandic Section has been very active. Their meetings in Reykjavik generally attract 40 to 60 persons and the emphasis has been very much on self-culture and meditation. The General Secretary says, 'Public interest in theosophical activities in Iceland is growing and the Icelandic Section is more lively than ever'. In Sweden, new pamphlets and books were brought out, including Shirley Nicholson's *Ancient Wisdom : Modern Insights, Self-Culture* by I.K. Taimni and *No Other Path to Go* by myself. The Order of Service in Sweden helps orphans in Latvia.

Miss Joy Mills and I visited Oslo. Unfortunately, the Section has no premises of its own and its library has remained in boxes for thirteen years! Despite setbacks, the General Secretary affirms their determination to go on. In Denmark also the small group of thirty-one members is doing its best in spite of the obstacles they have faced during the last few years. The Finnish Section celebrated its ninetieth anniversary. Its summer school was held as usual in the Kreivila Centre, where I gave a series of talks on meditation. Some Estonian members were given the opportunity to attend this summer school as guests. This year the Swedish Section also held its summer school there, to which I was invited. It had an interesting theme: 'Rhythm, Balance, Harmony'. The General Secretary of the Swiss Section reports that they had to face 'the most difficult years since 1910 to prove that we are not sectarian'. In several countries of Europe the press has made attacks on sectarian

organizations and has sometimes unfortunately included the Theosophical Society among them.

The highlight for the Dutch Section was its centenary, which was celebrated with éclat. A special exhibition was organized in Amsterdam, and a beautiful book on 100 years of Theosophy in the Netherlands was released along with a Dutch translation of *The Secret of Self-Realization* by I.K. Taimni. The summer school attracted many members. Lectures were given by Miss Joy Mills, Miss Mary Anderson, myself and others.

The publishing activities of the German Section underwent a major change, which is hoped will be for the better. The General Secretary says in connection with the summer school held in Lippstadt, where the Vice-President and I gave talks, 'An atmosphere of awakening into a new period of change and renewal of the Society was clearly felt'. The Austrian Section continues as usual. Miss Mary Anderson was present at their summer school and conducted a seminar on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

There was a slight increase in the number of members in France where there have been many problems. The National Convention, to which I was invited, was held in May in Paris. The summer school of the French-speaking countries was held in Belgium this year among the hills and forests of Ardennes with members from Belgium, France and Italy present. Prof P. Krishna's four lectures at the TS in Brussels and one in Antwerp have been termed a 'memorable success'.

The Spanish Section's magazine *Sophia* regularly disseminates Theosophy. Work is going on as usual in this country, as also in Portugal. The Italian Section retains the largest membership in Europe. They enjoyed visits from Miss Kim-Dieu, Chairman of the European Federation, Madame Danielle Audoin, present General Secretary of the French Section, and Miss Joy Mills. Next year the European Congress will be held in the lake region of Northern Italy. The General Secretary reports that some members have subscribed to a hundred copies of the Section magazine in order to disseminate Theosophy more widely. The Italian Publishing House has brought out Leadbeater's *Thought-Forms*, and *Man, Visible and Invisible*, and several other theosophical books.

The Lodges in Slovenia continue to be active. There is a group in Croatia, but because of the conflicts in the region, there is a barrier between different groups in the area. The General Secretary for Greece reports that five Lodges in the country are active and that their magazine is circulated to members and those interested in esoteric subjects.

Slow but steady progress is being made in the countries formerly dominated by communism. In Hungary there are a few study groups but no Lodges. Theosophical books in Hungarian are selling well. In Russia also there is progress. Two seminars were held — one in Moscow and another in the Ukraine — conducted by Miss Kim-Dieu. A number of members from the Eastern European

countries travelled to Holland and had an enjoyable and useful time participating in the events there.

In Tel Aviv, Israel, they are experimenting with a new kind of meeting in which a subject is presented by three lectures with different points of view, such as the Kabala, Eastern Religions and Theosophy. These evenings attract 100 to 120 people, many of them non-members. Several different courses are organized and a new edition of *The Key to Theosophy* was published. They were very happy that the Vice-President, Miss Anderson, visited them.

During the year I travelled a good deal both in India and abroad. Within India I visited Mumbai and then conducted a study class in Gujarat on the second fragment of *The Voice of the Silence* named 'The Two Paths'. Subsequently I visited Pakistan and spoke in Karachi and Hyderabad. Among the Federation conferences which I addressed were those of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Bombay and Madras. I also led a study class on *Thought Power* by Annie Besant in Varanasi. From May to August I was in Europe, first at the French Section Convention, and then in London, Oslo, Finland and Estonia, followed by an international seminar in Naarden and the centenary meeting and summer school of the Dutch Section. This visit ended with the German summer school. These were all occasions to meet members and discuss the work. As already mentioned, I was also at the Indo-Pacific Conference earlier this month.

Between early July and mid-November, the Vice-President visited six European countries, Israel and the United States. She lectured at the Dutch and German summer schools as well as in two towns in Germany, held a seminar at the Austrian summer school and gave lectures and seminars in Slovenia (in Ljubljana and Koper) and in Tel Aviv. In the USA she held four workshops at the Krotona School of Theosophy, lectured for the Ojai Valley Lodge, at Atlanta, Georgia, and at Olcott, the Section Headquarters in Wheaton. She found contact with members everywhere most valuable.

Adyar is proceeding on the whole satisfactorily. The Theosophical Publishing House is doing well and brought out a book by Dr Ravi Ravindra entitled *Yoga and the Teaching of Krishna*, apart from re-publishing the classics which is a continuous work.

The first 1997 session of the School of the Wisdom was on Applied Theosophy. Its application to psychology was dealt with by Miss Kim-Dieu, to social reconstruction by Mr Ricardo Lindemann from Brazil, to self-awareness by Mr and Mrs Ben Ward, to the environment by Mr M.P. Singhal, General Secretary of the Indian Section, and to daily life by Miss Mary Anderson. This session concluded with a week-long retreat on mindful living conducted by the well-known Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh. The retreat drew an attendance of about 200 persons from several countries, including many professionals for whom this was the

first contact with the Theosophical Society. The second session of the year was again on *The Mahatma Letters*, conducted by Miss Joy Mills, with students from several countries. For the first time we had the participation of a member coming directly from Cuba.

Computerization of the Adyar Library's inventory of holdings commenced during the spring. This is a work which will take some years to finish. The publications of the Library included a special issue of its bulletin *Brahmavidya* to mark its Diamond Jubilee. A revised edition of *Chhandogya Upanishad*, prepared by Dr Sankara Narayanan, and two pamphlets, one on Astronomy and Mathematics in Kerala, and the other entitled *Paushkaragama*, were also released. The services of the Library to the public continued as usual. We were thankful to Dr James Nye of the University of Chicago and Dr P. Sankaralingam of the Roja Muthia Research Library, Madras, for the help they gave to start the computerization.

The work of the Olcott Educational Society is proceeding very well. Improvements are taking place in the Olcott Memorial School and in the HPB Hostel, as competent volunteer helpers have offered their services. The Banyan Centre for Educators is also renewing itself. The Scout Camping Centre is another activity which benefits children. Numerous schools have utilized it for camping activities and 3,233 children benefited from the programmes, which included not only scouting, but tree-planting, bird-watching, video programmes of

'Beauty without Cruelty' and other events which are meant to create awareness of values.

There were few staff changes. Mrs Sudha Natarajan is now the Superintendent of Bhojanasala, replacing Mr R. Kalyanasundaram. We were very sorry to lose Mr S. Raman, who passed away in March. He edited the Convention Bulletin and was a valuable helper in the Secretary's office. The maintenance work on the estate is considerable, as many buildings are old. Apart from this, first floor structures have been erected on two more buildings in the Bhojanasala area to accommodate delegates during the Convention, which we hope will be more comfortable for them than the thatched huts. Plans include the provision of further facilities for delegates in the next few years.

In concluding this address I wish to thank all my colleagues at the International Headquarters. I have not been saying this year after year and making it into a routine. But it is a fact that without the active co-operation of the other officers and workers and the sacrifices they make, the heavy responsibility of ad-

ministering the Society and its Headquarters could not be carried on. It would be futile to name everyone, but I most sincerely express gratitude on your behalf as well as mine to the Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and committee members at Adyar, to those who work anonymously in my office and other offices, and to all the Heads of Departments who have striven to uphold the standards and ideals of the Society.

As students of Theosophy we know that everyone receives what he or she earns. It is not the thanks and appreciation we extend which matters, but the fact that all those who are unselfishly dedicated to the noble aims of the Society will receive due reward from unseen sources and possibly in unexpected ways. Karma will take care of that. Let us pray that such will always be the work done in the Society world-wide and also at its Adyar Headquarters, which is a very special place, that the highest blessing, which is the power to be of greater service, will be their privilege and reward as long as the world needs help and spiritual guidance.

Radha Burnier

THE TREASURER'S REPORT — 1997-98

THE TREASURER'S REPORT

AND

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 MARCH 1997

TREASURER'S REPORT — 1996-97

The income and Expenditure account of the Society for the year ending 31 March 1997 shows a surplus of Rs.259,615 as compared to Rs.102,821 for the previous year. The salient features of the year under review are as under:

A. Income:

The overall income of the Society went up marginally to Rs.8,306,650/- during the year, as compared to Rs.8,189,284/- for the previous year. The reduced surplus of Rs.386,411/- from the Theosophical Publishing House is due to higher allocation of depreciation by Rs.190,463/- resulting from substantial addition of assets, and a loss of Rs.59,700/- incurred on sale of equipment. However, the gross profit from the trading account went up due to increased sale of publications.

Income from investments for the year was Rs.5,855,478/- and this rising trend will be maintained for the next two to three years. However, due to a significant fall in the interest rates in the recent past, our interest income may be affected if there is no upward movement in the rates.

B. Expenditure:

1. Departments:

The net expenditure of the departments for the year was Rs.1,932,715/- compared to Rs.1,930,213/- for the previous year. The details are as follows:

	Year ended 31 March, 1997	Year ended 31 March, 1996
	Rs.	Rs.
Bhojanasala and Leadbeater Chambers	138,641	(143,303)
Garden	249,620	244,472
Maintenance	<u>1,544,454</u>	<u>1,829,044</u>
	<u>1,932,715</u>	<u>1,930,213</u>

Although the overall expenditure for the year did not go up, the main factor contributing to the increased expenditure in Bhojanasala and Leadbeater Chambers was the provision of solar heaters at a cost of Rs.190,000/- in Bhojanasala, and the deficit of Rs.158,321/- in the boarding account due to subsidized rates. This deficit trend in the boarding account will continue mainly due to increased cost of all inputs.

The revenue expenditure of the Maintenance Department went down as efforts were made to complete on-going capital projects during the financial year. It is expected that there will be significant spending in the coming years, as many of the buildings in the

estate require extensive renovation. In addition, there will be considerable outlay and expenditure on the water system, roads, and the headquarters building.

In respect of the Garden, the deficit was almost at the same level as the previous year. This deficit is likely to increase as the plan to beautify the estate is being implemented in phases.

2. Charitable Work:

During the year the amount spent on charitable work was Rs.1,601,396/- as compared to Rs.598,002/- for the previous year. This significant increase in spending was mainly on account of education and welfare grants. It is expected that the allocation to charitable work will go up substantially in the coming years when the Animal Welfare Centre comes up and further renovation of Olcott School buildings is taken up.

3. Propagation of Theosophy:

The net expenditure for propagation of Theosophy was Rs.1,151,142/- as compared to 683,258/- for last year. This increased expenditure of Rs.467,884/- was contributed by the Adyar Library and Research Centre and the Vasanta Press, as the net expenditure of the Library went up from Rs.339,522/- to Rs.675,526/-, and from Rs.92,199/- to Rs. 246,992/- in the case of the Press. The deficit in the magazine account will go up steeply in the coming year as the cost of printing has gone up. Also *The Theosophist* is being distributed free of cost to all the major public libraries, institutions and centres of learning in India. The restoration of art work and paintings has been taken up in phases and therefore the outlay on Archives and Museum will be higher in the ensuing year.

4. Other Costs:

The establishment cost went up from Rs.869,469/- to Rs.980,953/-, an increase of over 13% as compared to the previous year. There is a significant reduction in other expenses, as rates and taxes and miscellaneous expenses for 1995-96 include prior years' adjustments. Further, the appropriation to the Adyar Estate Improvement Fund for the year was Rs.200,000/- as compared to Rs.600,000/- for the previous year.

C. Capital Expenditure:

The amount spent on capital account for the year was Rs.2,745,243/-, and the major amount was spent for construction of the dining hall at Leadbeater Chambers, the new Editorial Office, and a residential unit in Besant Gardens. In addition, the computer facilities at the Editorial Office were upgraded, involving considerable expenditure.

In the coming year the outlay on capital account is expected to increase as construction of first floors on various buildings will be taken up to accommodate delegates attending the Conventions. Also, the Vasanta Press needs additional equipment involving a large outlay. This new equipment will provide flexibility in its operations.

D. Funds:

The overall financial position of the Society continues to be satisfactory. During the year the Adyar Besant Commemorative Fund rose from Rs.27,361,041/- to Rs.31,794,559/- and Other Funds from Rs.35,492,407/- to Rs.38,366,390/-.

E. Acknowledgement:

On behalf of the Society, I express my gratitude for the continuing support of the members throughout the world.

Chennai
16 December 1997

D.K. Govindaraj
Hony. Treasurer

FEES AND DUES RECEIVED

(From 1 April 1996 to 31 March 1997)

Name of the Section		1995-96	1996-97
		Rs.	Rs.
The Theosophical Society in Africa, East and Central	...	—	—
"	Africa, South	—	1,038
"	Africa, West	2,440	—
"	America, Central	3,462	4,657
"	Argentina	162,552	153,546
"	Asia, South-East	—	18,265
"	Australia	87,134	115,449
"	Austria	10,694	—
"	Belgium	31,444	30,145
"	Bolivia	13,409	15,410
"	Brazil	—	—
"	Canada	3,450	3,214
"	Chile	15,838	8,496
"	Colombia	—	—
"	Cuba	—	—
"	Denmark	5,477	6,603
"	England	212,555	—
"	Finland	42,396	37,518
"	France	100,400	—
"	Germany	92,795	54,706
"	Greece	7,395	17,215
"	Hungary	3,169	3,124
"	Iceland	17,435	16,215
"	India	37,674	35,411
"	Indonesia	7,158	—
"	Ireland, North	—	762
"	Ireland, Republic of	2,544	3,532
"	Italy	1,715	37,316
"	Mexico	—	1,399
"	Netherlands, The	76,118	154,800
"	New Zealand	16,219	24,078
"	Norway	7,411	—
"	Pakistan	—	—
"	Peru	8,142	—
"	Philippines, The	—	40,049
"	Portugal	11,068	—
"	Puerto Rico	—	26,190
"	Scotland	5,676	3,555
"	Slovenia	—	4,295
"	Spain	51,881	24,607
"	Sweden	39,201	—
"	Sri Lanka	—	—
"	Switzerland	—	—
"	USA	280,780	333,770
"	Uruguay	20,718	25,383
"	Venezuela	2,388	2,141
"	Wales	1,386	1,612
Lodges attached to Adyar	...	38,671	14,640
Fellows at large	...	13,187	28,916
		1,433,982	1,248,05

THE THEOSOPHICAL BALANCE SHEET AS

Year ended 31-3-1996	LIABILITIES	Schedule No.	Year ended 31-3-1997	
Rs.			Rs.	Rs.
	General Fund:			
23,320,332	Balance as per last Balance Sheet ...		23,669,516	
42,588	Add: Transfer from Adyar Estate Improvement Fund ...		2,489,292	
102,821	Add: Surplus for the year ...		259,615	
203,775	Add: Capital Receipts		250,633	
23,669,516				26,669,056
27,361,041	Adyar Besant Commemorative Fund ...			31,794,559
35,492,407	Other Funds ...	5		38,366,390
2,998,665	Current Liabilities and Provisions ...	6		4,892,238
89,521,629				101,722,243

CHENNAI
5-12-1997

D. K. GOVINDARAJ
Hony. Treasurer

AT 31ST MARCH 1997

FRASER & ROSS
Chartered Accountants

THE THEOSOPHICAL

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

Year ended 31-3-1996	EXPENDITURE	Year ended 31-3-1997	
Rs.		Rs.	Rs.
	Departments: (Net Expenditure)		
—143,303	Bhojanasala & Leadbeater Chambers	138,641	
244,472	Garden	249,620	
1,829,044	Maintenance	1,544,454	1,932,715
	Charitable Work:		
103,699	Animal Welfare	131,933	
462,839	Education	1,268,299	
6,441	Welfare Grants	83,965	
111,399	Free Dispensary and Medical Aid	119,459	
14,050	School Fees and Books	22,600	
13,483	Social Welfare Work	28,027	
1,500	T O S International	2,000	
18,120	Others	18,840	
		1,675,123	
48,273	<i>Less: Transfer from Other Funds</i>	73,727	
	Propagation of Theosophy: (Net Expenditure):		1,601,396
339,522	Adyar Library and Research Centre	675,526	
23,127	The Theosophist and Adyar Newsletter	33,071	
92,199	Vasanta Press	246,992	
62,394	School of the Wisdom	70,457	
1,228	T. S. Workers' Training Camp	15,440	
10,693	Information and Public Relations	8,936	
92,983	Archives and Museum	116,160	
42,466	Theosophy Science Centre	—	
		1,166,582	
1,228	<i>Less: Transfer from Other Funds</i>	15,440	
	International Offices:		1,151,142
35,157	President and Vice-President	57,566	
181,830	Treasurer	180,067	
122,773	Secretary	136,264	373,897
	Establishment:		
94,528	Headquarters	122,490	
50,194	General Manager's Office	52,663	
121,262	Movable Properties Department	112,596	
125,096	Sanitation Department	160,601	
478,389	Security Department	532,603	980,953
4,486,084	c/f		6,040,103

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 1997

[illegible]

CHENNAI
5-12-1997

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 1997

D. K. GOVINDARAJ
Hony. Treasurer

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

BUDGET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31-3-1999

EXPENDITURE

INCOME

	Rs.		Rs.
Departments (Net Expenditure)		Propagation of Theosophy	
Bhojanasala	... 148,500	Theosophical Publishing House	... 222,000
Leadbeater Chambers	... 138,500	General Donations	... 300,000
Garden	... 325,000	Interest	... 7,700,000
Maintenance	... 2,859,000	Membership Fees and Dues	... 1,500,000
		Licence Fees	... 84,000
Charitable Work		Miscellaneous Receipts	... 300,000
Animal Welfare	... 300,000	Net Deficit	... 315,000
Education	... 1,200,000		
Welfare Grants	... 200,000		
Free Dispensary & Medical Aid	... 180,000		
TOS International	... 30,000		
School Fees and Books	... 50,000		
Social Welfare Work	... 100,000		
Others	... 50,000		
Propagation of Theosophy			
Adyar Library and			
Research Centre	... 809,000		
The Theosophist and			
Adyar Newsletter	... 162,000		
Vasanta Press	... 171,000		
School of the Wisdom	... 90,000		
Workers' Training Camp	... 36,000		
Information and Public Relations	... 15,000		
Archives and Museum	... 150,000		
Theosophy Science Centre	... 45,000		
International Offices			
President and Vice-President	... 72,000		
Treasurer	... 200,000		
Secretary	... 150,000		
Establishment			
Headquarters	... 150,000		
General Manager's Office	... 60,000		
Movable Properties Department	... 200,000		
Sanitation Department	... 200,000		
Security Department	... 675,000		
Other Expenses			
Insurance Premiums	... 6,000		
Legal Expenses	... 50,000		
Audit Fees	... 40,000		
Rates and Taxes	... 400,000		
Motor Car Maintenance	... 36,000		
Miscellaneous	... 120,000		
Depreciation	... 1,000,000		
Bank Charges	... 3,000		
	<u>10,421,000</u>		<u>10,421,000</u>

OFFICERS AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS FOR 1997

Executive Committee:

1. Mrs Radha Burnier	<i>President</i>
2. Miss Mary Anderson	<i>Vice-President</i>
3. Mr Conrad Jamieson	<i>Secretary</i>
4. Mr D.K. Govindaraj	<i>Treasurer</i>
5. Mrs Norma Y. Sastry	<i>General Council Member</i>
6. Mr Surendra Narayan	<i>General Council Member</i>
7. Mr K. Visvanathan	
8. Mr R.M. Tolani	

General Manager: Mr R.M. Tolani**Adyar Library:** *Director:* Dr K.K. Raja*Librarian:* Mrs Parvati Gopalaratnam**Bhojanasala:** Mrs Sudha Natarajan**Garden:** Mr R.V. Narayanan**Information:** Mr C. Seshadri**Leadbeater Chambers:** Mrs Uma Nilakanta**Maintenance:** Mr Kousik Krishnan**Medical:** Dr Susheela Oza**Movable Properties:** Mr D.V. Subramanian**Museum and Archives:** Ms Idarmis Rodriguez**School of the Wisdom:** *Directors:* Mr Conrad Jamieson (Jan.-March 1997)
Miss Joy Mills (Oct.-Dec. 1997)**Security:** Lt Col T.P. Raj Kumar**Theosophical Publishing House:** *Manager:* Mr D.K. Govindaraj**Vasanta Press:** Dr N.C. Ramanujachary

OLCOTT EDUCATION SOCIETY*Chairman:* President, TS*Acting Secretary:* Mr D.K. Govindaraj*Treasurer:* Mr K. Visvanathan**Olcott Memorial School:** *Headmistress:* Mrs Lakshmi Narasimhan**HPB Hostel:** Mr Ananta Padmanabhan**Social Welfare Centre:** Mrs Radha Muthiah

THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

The work of the Theosophical Publishing House has been satisfactory during the year. Several reprints and also a new book entitled *Yoga and the Teaching of Krishna* by Dr Ravi Ravindra were published. Preparations are being made to publish some new books and fresh editions of previous publications during the coming year.

The production of books is being closely monitored to ensure the quality of our publications. *The Theosophist* comes out with a new cover design and a good quality paper, which readers have appreciated.

We are in the process of establishing a distribution network in India, and are hopeful of achieving better sales in the coming years, with our books made available in leading

bookshops throughout the country. We are anxious that our books should be exported to as many countries as possible and therefore efforts are being made to keep the selling price to a minimum to obtain more orders.

The Publishing House's operations are fully computerized and the efficiency of the department is improving.

Under the Book Gift Scheme, we continue to donate books to individuals and lodges. Copies of *The Theosophist* and *Wake Up India* are being sent free of cost to all major public libraries, established institutions and centres of learning in India, as a promotional experiment.

Mr D.K. Govindaraj
Manager

THE ADYAR LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTRE

Activities continued as usual, with the help of the staff. Dr K. Kunjunni Raja, Hon. Director, attends to the academic activities of the Library. Publications included the Diamond Jubilee issue of *Brahmavidya* (the Adyar Library Bulletin), vol. 60/1996, and a reprint of *Visnumriti Vyakhya*, vols. I and II. Works in preparation include the *Colloquium Summary*, textual criticism by K. Kunjunni Raja, *Sangitaratnakara*, vol. IV, revised by Smt. S. Sarada, and *Prabhakaravijaya*.

The Library rendered services as usual to many scholars and users, including seven research scholars, one being from Rome and the others from Madras University. Photocopies of rare books and manuscripts were supplied, totalling 59,784 frames, including 30,406 frames of books, 1,849 of palm-leaf manuscripts, 772 of paper manuscripts and 10,878 for the use of the Library itself.

During the year, 364 books were purchased and a total of 1,100 were presented to the Library by the

Theosophical Publishing Houses in Wheaton and Adyar, the President's office etc. The Library also catalogued and added to its collection 1,064 books. The Library has 257 readers and 488 borrowers. During the year 1,529 books were accessed, 21,054 were consulted by Pandits and others, 5,941 were borrowed, and 874 manuscripts consulted. One book was de-acidified, 19 were laminated and 1,012 were bound. Some microfilming problems have still to be solved. The Minolta Reader

Printer cannot be used as the 35mm reduction lens is not available.

Computerization of the Library is proceeding under the guidance and supervision of Mr S. Venkatesh. His team of workers made 3,000 entries. It is regretted that Dr P. Sankaralingam, Director of Raja Muthiah Research Library, passed away in October. We are very grateful for all the help he gave to this project.

Mrs Parvati Gopalaratnam
Librarian

THE SCHOOL OF THE WISDOM

Each of the two terms in 1997 was attended by about 40 students from 10 countries in addition to India. In the January-February sessions, different facets of the theme 'Theosophy Applied' were treated by the following speakers: Miss Tran-Thi-Kim-Dieu (Psychology), Mr Ricardo Lindemann (Social Reconstruction), Mr M.P. Singhal (The Environment), Miss Mary Anderson (Daily Life), and Mr and Mrs Ben and Carol Ward (Personal Interactions). Additional to the programme was the Retreat held on 3-7 March, conducted by the well-known Vietnamese monk

Thich-Nhat-Hanh on 'The Art of Mindful Living', attended by 200 participants from different countries.

The second session (October-December) was conducted by Ms Joy Mills on *The Mahatma Letters*, presenting a comprehensive course. In some of the afternoon sessions Dr Kannan spoke on aspects of the work of the Theosophy Science Centre and 'Insights from Science', involving consciousness as a paradigm. Mr Conrad Jamieson spoke on aspects of Brotherhood: 'Big Brother Mar'.

Mr Conrad Jamieson
International Secretary

ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM

Recataloguing of the photographic collection under the new system was completed and recataloguing of documents continued thanks to Mrs Kyllikki Vuorinen from Finland, who again worked several months in the Archives this year.

Many requests for information were received from various countries. Material was supplied for a new biography of C.W. Leadbeater by Dr Peter Michel (Germany), to be published soon. Also documents and photographs were provided to a local television film crew for a segment on

the life of Annie Besant, as part of a television programme to be broadcast throughout India. Copies of more than 50 photographs and other documents were made available to the Tamil Nadu Archives for their Freedom Movement exhibition to celebrate the 50th anniversary of India's independence.

Members and students attending the School of the Wisdom visited the Archives display room and the Museum.

Ms Idarmis Rodriguez
Officer-in-Charge

OLCOTT EDUCATION SOCIETY

Certain effective steps were taken as part of the Olcott Education Society's continuing efforts to develop the Olcott Memorial High School, HPB Hostel, and Welfare Centre.

Olcott Memorial High School

The school reopened on 10 June 1996 with a strength of 740 students, 70 children having been admitted in 1st Standard. Fifty percent of the 48 students who took the Class X Public Examination passed. Students attended an Eco Camp and a film show organized by the environmental Society. Mr Srinivasan, of that Society, arranged 15 classes for the students of VIIIth standard. Two teachers and 50 students attended a pottery workshop. Our girl students

came second in the State Kabadi tournament and three boys came second in the District Athletic meet. Students of 1st and 2nd Standards visited Vandalur Zoo under the aegis of the 'Teaching English to the Disadvantaged' programme. Our students had the opportunity to participate in a drama festival at The School, Krishnamurti Foundation of India.

The school celebrated Independence Day, Sports Day, Children's Day, Republic Day and Olcott Day in a befitting manner. The usual annual medical check-up was arranged. This year our teachers participated in the Youth Forum for Gandhian studies. Our students took an active part in a television quiz

programme, and in folk-dancing and hand-writing competitions. Teachers and students also participated in the activities of the Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society. This year the girls started using Salvarkameez (Indian dress) as a uniform.

The School is now benefited by having Mrs Padma Srinath, Educationist, as Director. She is interacting with teachers and senior students, drawing up imaginative programmes and also supplementing the work of the Headmistress. Mrs Aruna Balasubramanian has worked as Co-ordinator of Studies full time in the School. She had previously done research work in the Olcott School on the underprivileged, visiting the children's homes, collecting data, and submitting the results for her doctoral thesis to an American University. She is also Director of the Banyan Centre for Educators and is making plans to revitalize its activities.

HPB Hostel

The Hostel was running satisfactorily for a time but the need was felt to improve cleanliness and discipline. Mrs Parvati Bai was appointed as Superintendent in place

of Ms Gayatri and the overall running of the hostel was satisfactory.

Mr Anantha Padmanabhan, a senior teacher at the School, Krishnamurti Foundation India, offered to look after the hostel and replaced Mrs Parvati Bai from October 1997. He is organizing academic activities for the children. Facilities are being improved, and in this context, it was decided to buy a new refrigerator, study and play material, etc.

Social Welfare Centre

The Centre is working satisfactorily under the supervision of Mrs Radha Muthiah. She is being assisted by Mrs Putamma, a member from Karnataka. Dr Revathi is attending to the Centre's medical needs.

Independence Day, Pongal, Sports Day, Children's Day and Parents' Day were celebrated. A picnic was arranged at the Theosophical Society's Besant Scout Camping Centre to familiarize the children with nature. An excursion of Balwadi children was arranged to the Snake Park. Staff members visited the Social Welfare Centre at Stella Maris College.

Mr K.P. Shenoy

Secretary, Olcott Education Society

THE THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE

For almost ninety years, the TOS has offered a framework in which people may engage in practical and humanitarian action, promoting the first object of the Theosophical Society: the formation of a nucleus of universal brotherhood.

The Theosophical Society, with its emphasis on complete freedom of thought for every member, officially maintains neutrality in controversial political and social issues. The Theosophical Order of Service, on the other hand, acts as a forum where members may air their views on such subjects.

This year an issue of the TOS international bulletin, *The Service Link*, was devoted to animal welfare. Ongoing secondary themes in the bulletin have included theosophical

parenting, world peace, and mental illness in the light of Theosophy. A section in Spanish has been added to the bulletin for our many active members in Spain and Latin America.

In addition to editing *The Service Link's* Spanish pages, Fernando Perez Martin of Madrid has taken over correspondence with our Spanish-speaking workers. He has coordinated the translation into Spanish of the new edition of the healing ritual, to be distributed to TS General Secretaries and TOS National Directors in Spanish-speaking areas early in 1998. He has also prepared an introductory TOS brochure in Spanish for use by new TOS groups.

Mrs Diana Dunningham Chapotin
International Secretary, TOS

REPORTS OF GENERAL SECRETARIES

AFRICA, EAST AND CENTRAL

REPORTS OF SECTIONS, NATIONAL SOCIETIES, REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, PRESIDENTIAL REPRESENTATIVES, ETC.

(Where necessary, reports have been translated,
edited or condensed.)

REPORTS OF GENERAL SECRETARIES

AFRICA, EAST AND CENTRAL

The Section comprises Tanzania, Kenya and Zambia, and has 15 lodges with 420 members in all. The Section Headquarters shifted from Nairobi to Dar-es-Salaam in April 1997 with the election as General Secretary of Mr H.G. Devani. There are great difficulties in receiving information from Zambia due to distance and inefficient means of communication. There has been a steady decline in membership during the last few years owing to the emigration of members of Asian origin.

Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi lodges hold meetings twice weekly in English and Gujarati and a ladies' meeting once a week. A wide variety of

theosophical books are studied in the lodges.

Programmes are designed to disseminate theosophical teachings and bring about a wider perspective on issues of life. The lodges celebrated the important theosophical commemorative days.

The 39th biennial Convention was held on 28-30 March 1997 with the theme *Theosophy—The Powerhouse for the Twenty-first Century*. The national lecturer addressed educational institutions in Kenya and Tanzania. A good stock of books is available for sale. TOS work continues in several lodges.

Mr H. G. Devani
General Secretar

AFRICA, SOUTHERN

The Section continues to be active in promoting a greater awareness of its existence and objects amongst all sectors of the population. The result has been improved attendance at lectures and other activities. The General Secretary visited the lodges in in South Africa and also Harare in Zimbabwe. Three successful weekend retreats were held. TOS work has continued with counseling for people with serious difficulties.

Political unrest and escalating crime in the country caused a decline in membership, which has now been halted. Membership has risen to 252 this year. During the past two years, ways to disseminate Theosophy by a wide field of activities have been investigated. Reports from the lodges indicate that enthusiastic work with varied programmes has brought a good public response.

The Section will be celebrating the

Centenary of the Johannesburg Lodge and the beginnings of Theosophy in South Africa at the national Convention in Johannesburg over Easter weekend 1998. The

International President will be the main guest speaker.

Mr T.G. Davis
General Secretary

AFRICA, WEST

The work in the Section consisted of members' meetings, study meetings and the commemoration of anniversaries such as Adyar Day and White Lotus Day.

The lodge membership consists of members resident at the place where the lodge is chartered and members in surrounding towns and villages. This arrangement has been adopted in order to prevent distant members from feeling isolated and neglected and to give them a sense of belonging.

The Section's headquarters is now open from Monday to Friday from

9.30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 5 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. to cater for enquirers after business hours. Since it has been kept open to the public, people have been calling to enquire about the aims of the Society and to collect information leaflets.

Many donations of books were received from Quest Publications USA and from TPH Adyar. Some of these will be sent to lodges in the Section.

Mr Paul Kwakyi
General Secretary

ARGENTINA

The General Secretary visited various parts of Argentina. There were regular public activities in the whole country. The National Council also promoted activities in neighbouring countries. The idea of establishing an American Centre of Theosophical Studies in Argentina was discussed by the General Secretary and the President of the Inter-American Federation, who advocated the project. A Theosophic Scientific Centre has been constituted.

Books published included Spanish translations of *Dreams* and *Principles*

of *Theosophical Work*. It is planned to publish some further translations of standard theosophical works next year. The Section magazine appears every two months.

The Annual Convention was held in December in Rosario, 14 lodges and three centres being represented.

Youth activities continued with a varied programme in many areas, the young people producing a weekly radio programme entitled *Thoughts on Life*.

Mr Jorge Cesano
General Secretary

AUSTRALIA

Membership stands at 1428, representing an increase of 28 members. A number of workshops open to the public on a variety of themes were presented throughout the Section. Lodges held successful study and discussion meetings. Theosophical activities continue at the Manor in Sydney and Springbrook Centre in Queensland, where 22 students attended the study courses, which included a Theosophy-Science workshop. A considerable amount of work was done by TOS groups to raise funds. The Round Table had a most successful international camp in the Adelaide Hills.

Perth Lodge celebrated its centenary with Dr Henryk

Skolimowski and his wife as special guests. They also visited many centres in the country. The International Vice-President toured Australia in October. The National President also visited different theosophical groups.

In January 2001 the Section will host the ninth World Congress of the Society, the keynote being 'In Tune with the Universe'.

A committee has been formed to oversee the development and potential use of the Campbell Theosophical Research Library in the Section offices.

Mrs Beverley Champion
General Secretary

AUSTRIA

Work continued as usual. Lectures on esoteric subjects were presented and topics connected with daily life were discussed. A special highlight was the study week in August, where lectures were given on yoga and the way to self-realization and the Vice-

President, Miss Mary Anderson, conducted a seminar on the *Yoga-Sutras* of Patanjali. Guests from neighbouring countries contributed to the programme.

Mr Franz Durkowitsch
General Secretary

BELGIUM

The four lodges in Brussels studied basic Theosophy, *The Yoga-Sutras* of Patanjali, astrology and Krishnamurti's teachings. The four provincial lodges held monthly public lectures and weekly study groups. A

study course on Theosophy was held fortnightly in Brussels and monthly in Liege and Charleroi.

In August the Section organized the summer school of the Latin countries in the Ardennes, with 54 participants.

The theme was 'Wisdom's Answers to Problems of the Modern World'. Prof Krishna gave four lectures in Brussels

and one in Antwerp Lodge. His visit was a memorable success.

Dr H. van der Hecht
General Secretary

BRAZIL

The 17th summer school was held in Campo Grande in February on the theme 'Experiencing Spirituality', with studies on *At the Feet of the Master* and *The Mahatma Letters*. At the third international Theosophical School in July the guest speaker was Mr Juan Vinas, who gave a seminar on 'The Relation between Master and Disciple in *The Mahatma Letters*'. The usual winter seminar took place in July with three different member panels, presenting a study on 'The Inner Life', based on C.W. Leadbeater's book. Regional gatherings were held in different parts of the country, coordinated by the regional councils. The young theosophists held a weekend meeting on 'Youth and the Theosophical Life'.

The National Council discussed at length the subject 'What is the Theosophical Society that we want in the next century?', based on Dr Taimni's *Principles of Theosophical*

Work and Radha Burnier's *Human Regeneration*.

Seven theosophical books, including translations, were published. The national magazine received strong support from qualified and devoted members who translated articles from English and French into Portuguese. A number of theosophical pamphlets were published and distributed free of charge to lodges and study centres. Several television interviews took place, publicizing lectures and book releases. A course for the training of members is now being prepared.

The Section runs a home for about ten children. A second home has been started for a further ten children, but construction has been delayed for lack of funds. It is hoped to continue the building in 1998. A second-hand van has been purchased to take the children to school, doctor's visits, etc.

Mr Ulisses Riedel de Resende
General Secretary

CHILE

The four lodges commemorated the important anniversaries of the Society. A 'Meditation of the Nations' was held every Saturday, along with videos, forums and lectures. Several radio broadcasts evoked a good

response. They will be continued. Visits from several international lecturers provided a welcome addition to the programme. In November a group of Young Theosophists was formed and a first international youth

gathering took place with visitors from neighbouring countries like Uruguay and Argentina.

Mr Juan Carlos Palmeri of Argentina conducted a series of basic theosophical courses and workshops.

After the passing of the General Secretary, Mr Carlos Ramirez Lohaus, the Vice-General Secretary, Mr S. Rosello, took over until the National Council elected Mr Maximiliano Aguilera as General Secretary.

Mr Maximiliano Aguilera
General Secretary

COLOMBIA

The Section has eight lodges and a total of 74 members in good standing. The 121st anniversary of the Society was commemorated. At the White Lotus Day celebration four new members were admitted.

Lectures were held every Sunday and three one-month courses on basic

theosophical subjects and on the power of thought took place on several Saturdays. Isolated groups were visited. Some forums, panels and meditation groups met.

Mr Jesus Antonio Rojas
General Secretary

CUBA

The lodges continued their study of classical theosophical literature: *The Science of Yoga, Glimpses into the Psychology of Yoga* and *Self-Culture* by Dr I. K. Taimni; *The Secret Doctrine, The Mahatma Letters, Light on the Path* and *Human Regeneration* were also studied.

The number of members' meetings increased and an introductory course for enquirers was started at headquarters. Public meetings were held on the subjects of children's education, vegetarianism and the essence of religions.

Dr Lelia Fernandez Pagola
General Secretary

ENGLAND

Activities continued at the headquarters, with evening lectures on Sundays and occasionally on Wednesdays. Courses were held on *The Secret Doctrine, Taoism, the Tarot* and the Kabbala. The Dhyana

Centre continued its bi-weekly meditation sessions and held several retreats lasting one day. A small study group meets regularly to explore basic theosophy, based on *The Mahatma Letters* and *The Secret Doctrine*.

The International President visited London in May and gave a public lecture at Blavatsky Lodge on 'The Theosophical Society and the Progress of Humanity'. Joy Mills gave a lecture and seminar and John Algeo spent a few days in London in April and delivered a lecture on 'The Labyrinth, the Maze and the Meander'.

The summer school took place in August at the University of Nottingham with the keynote 'Theosophy, Science and the Ancient

Wisdom'. Dr Edi Bilimoria delivered the Blavatsky lecture on 'Mirages in Western Science resolved by Occult Science'. The annual Theosophy-Science Conference was held at Tekels Park, the theme being 'Modern Science and the Esoteric Philosophy'. In July the Section hosted the international history conference; the three days' session included fifteen talks.

Miss Lilian Storey
General Secretary

FINLAND

The Convention took place in Helsinki on 29 March in a harmonious atmosphere with talks and musical performances. Public lectures were organized in Helsinki every Sunday, also during the summer, and in other cities several times a month. The elementary course for beginners continued in Helsinki for a second year. In Tallinn, Estonia, public lectures were given regularly by the General Secretary and others.

The summer school was held at Kreivila. The President, Radha Burnier, who was the guest speaker,

gave six lectures under the title 'Meditation as a Way to Inner Peace'. The President also visited Estonia and gave two lectures in Tallinn to large audiences.

After the summer vacation, a good start was made with a weekend called 'From summer to autumn' on the theme 'The Masters of the Wisdom and the Theosophical Society'.

Several books were translated, including Annie Besant's *Laws of the Higher Life*.

Mrs Kirsti Elo
General Secretary

FRANCE

Membership has increased from 471 to 506, and internal problems are being solved. Public lectures by theosophists and persons of renown were held every week, and regular courses, lodge meetings and viewing

of Krishnamurti videos continued.

The National Convention took place in May, the International President being present. Members from the West of France again organized a seminar in Brittany,

attended by many members from other parts of the country as well as Belgium and Switzerland. In February there were seminars on evolving Theosophy and on the Templars.

Prof C.T. Phan attended the

French-speaking summer school in Belgium. In June 1997, he resigned as General Secretary and Mme Danielle Audoin replaced him pending elections to be held in 1998.

Mme Danielle Audoin
General Secretary

GERMANY

Lodge programmes showed a great variety of activities: study evenings, excursions, talks, ceremonies and workshops. Studies are based on theosophical literature and fundamental questions concerning Theosophy. The executive committee works in a spirit of unity and harmony to find solutions to the Section's problems. A new lodge was formed near Munich.

The summer school was held in Lippstadt, with an interesting and varied programme, including an excursion to a prehistoric place of worship. The programme was enhanced by the presence of the International President and Vice-President and other well-known lecturers. An atmosphere of awakening and renewal in the Society was clearly felt, coupled with the hope

and intention to carry this over into everyday life. The German-speaking School of Theosophy took place in October 1996 in Michelstadt, the study being mainly on *The Secret Doctrine*.

The change in the editorship of the Adyar magazine is progressing. The new editorial team will increasingly accept responsibility, so that by the end of 1997 the change-over will be completed. The Section has severed its connections with the Adyar-Verlag (publishing house).

The increasingly critical economic situation leaves young members little opportunity for active contributions and the acceptance of responsibilities in the work of the Section.

Ger Baron v.d. Osten-Sacken
General Secretary

GREECE

All five lodges continued work, except one which was suspended in February 1997. The subjects of study are theosophical topics, esotericism and philosophy, always within the limits dictated by the theosophical

spirit and the purposes of the Society. Lectures were given in different lodges on almost every day of the week at the headquarters. Attendance was very satisfactory, leading to an increase in the number of members.

The Lodges celebrated the important anniversaries of the Society.

Publication of the magazine *Ilisos* continued. It is distributed to members

and friends of the Society. The number of subscribers is approximately 1500.

Mr P. Anagnostou
General Secretary

ICELAND

There was a variety of weekly programmes from October to Lotus Day. Public meetings on Friday evenings with lectures and discussion panels were open to members and the public, attracting some 40 to 60 persons. On Saturday afternoons the Section kept an 'open house', with short lectures and discussions. On Sundays there was a meditation hour with instructions for beginners and an advanced meditation group met in silence on Mondays. An eight-week self-culture course was held for beginners and a study group of about 12 people met to read and discuss books on esoteric philosophy. Three

lodges were active outside the Reykjavik area, with monthly or bi-monthly meetings. About 40 members attended the summer school in June.

Membership is increasing. It is felt that general public interest is growing and activity within the section is livelier than ever. 28 new members joined the Society. The number of subscribers to the section magazine *Gangleri* amounts to more than three times that of the members.

At the general meeting in May Mr Jon L. Arnalds was elected General Secretary.

Mr Jon Arnalds
General Secretary

INDIA

The 106th Annual Convention was held at Adyar on 27 December 1996, attended by several hundred delegates. The Assistant General Secretary welcomed the delegates and read out greetings from many Lodges and members.. The international Vice-President presided. The President inaugurated the Convention.

Membership increased by 1168 to 11,939, with 444 lodges and centres.

Almost all the Federations celebrated annual conferences, the President being chief guest on many

occasions. They were grateful for her valuable guidance and inspiration. A study camp was held at Bhowali from 21 May to 8 June, with 28 participants. The books studied were *The Ancient Wisdom* and *In the Outer Court*, Mr R. G. Bhadbhade and Mr S.V. Tyagi being the directors. *The Voice of the Silence* was the subject of the annual study camp at Varanasi, directed by the President, for which 150 delegates registered from different parts of India. The Inter-Federation Conference was held in

Varanasi in August on the theme 'How the TS in India can help Nation-Building', in commemoration of the 150th birth anniversary of Dr Besant. The theme of the South Indian Conference, held at Adyar in March was 'Individual and National Regeneration in the Light of Theosophy'. The President inaugurated the Conference. Emphasis was laid on the need to have a holistic approach, correct vision and a healing and philanthropic touch.

The General Secretary visited 16 lodges and conducted a course on 'Theosophy applied to the environment' at the School of the Wisdom. The national lecturers visited a large number of lodges in different Federations. Mr N.P. Sundaresan directed a study camp at Thekkady on 'The Upanishads', visited lodges, gave a talk at the South Indian Conference in Adyar and presided over several Federation meetings in different parts of India.

Dr Annie Besant's birth anniversary was celebrated at the Indian Section Headquarters, with Prof D. M. Chaturvedi, former Vice-Chancellor of Kashi Vidyapeeth, as chief guest. The Foundation Day of the TS was celebrated at the

headquarters, the guest speaker being Dr Ranjee Singh. The other theosophical anniversaries were also celebrated. The lodge at headquarters organizes public lectures every Friday. Once a month the Ritual of the Mystic Star is performed. Different books are studied at meetings on Tuesdays.

A new librarian, Miss Indira Gupta, was appointed. The headquarters serves as Indian agent for the distribution of two international journals, *The Theosophical Digest* and the international TOS journal *The Service Link*, both published in the Philippines. A reprint of the book *Adrushya Sahayak* and a Hindi translation of Dr Besant's address in Chicago before the Parliament of Religions in 1893, *The Universal Law of Life*, were published. A large number of books in Hindi and English are waiting to be printed. *The Indian Theosophist* is issued monthly and mailed to members who know English.

Suitable members are required for the work of propagating Theosophy. Members who can stay for two to three years at headquarters are welcome.

Mr Umakanth Rao
for: M. P. Singhal
General Secretary

INDONESIA

The Annual Convention was replaced by a referendum, due to the General Election in May, when meetings were prohibited for one month.

A two-day seminar was organized

in September, conducted by Mr Vicente Hao Chin Jr. This was followed by a panel discussion on the three objects of the Society in commemoration of the centenary of Theosophy in Indonesia. Mr Hao Chin

also presented a seminar on 'Self-Transformation'. A member of Perth Lodge visited two of the lodges and held a talk on aspects of the Kabbala in *The Secret Doctrine*.

Twenty-five copies of *An Approach to the Secret Doctrine*, based on a study guide published by the TS in England, were distributed to lodges and study groups. A course held by Mr

Geoffrey Hodson in Java in 1936 was translated from the Dutch and 400 copies are being printed. Publication of the magazine has been suspended, the editor having retired due to pressure of professional work. In its place the lodges are receiving a bi-monthly newsletter.

Mr H. M. Soesiswo
General Secretary

ITALY

The national convention held in June was well attended, guest speakers from abroad being the Chairman of the European Federation, Miss Tran-Thi-Kim-Dieu, Mme Danielle Audoin and Miss Joy Mills. The theme was 'Theosophy and the Way of Service'. The subject of the annual seminar held in March with the participation of the European Federation was 'Knowledge and Wisdom'. There was a public meeting to celebrate the centenary of the founding of the first theosophical group in Rome. Public lectures and seminars were well attended. The European Congress will take place in Italy in 1998 and preparations were under way. This will be an occasion to meet fellow-members from abroad.

There are 51 active lodges and six centres in the Section, several new lodges having been founded this year. A number of groups are operating in

various areas, doing important work in conformity with the Rules and Regulations of the Society. The General Secretary tried to keep in contact by visiting a large number of lodges. It would be desirable to have the work of the International Centre of Theosophical Studies, headed by Mr Renato de Grandis, integrated into the work of the Section.

Some members have offered to pay for 100 subscriptions to the magazine to be sent to the principal cultural institutions and libraries. Many excellent theosophical books were issued by the Section Publishing House. Its catalogue is being widely distributed.

The TS was featured on a cultural radio programme and also on a local private network run by a member.

Mr Antonio Girardi
General Secretary

MEXICO

The Section is working very hard and harmoniously. Some well-

prepared theosophical conferences were held. There are plans for several

schools and a variety of programmes. It is planned to unify programmes and administrative matters with other South American sections in

consultation with the Inter-American Federation.

Ms Lisette Arroyo Jimenez
General Secretary

THE NETHERLANDS

The Section worked hard in preparation for its Centenary, which was celebrated in July 1997. The contributions of the President, the Vice-President and Miss Joy Mills to the celebrations and summer school were much appreciated. There was an exhibition on '100 years of Theosophy in the Netherlands', to which several newspapers drew attention. A history of the Section was published, entitled *A Nucleus of Brotherhood - 100 Years of the Theosophical Society in the Netherlands*. A beautiful Dutch edition of *The Secret of Self-Realization* by Dr I. K. Taimni was

presented to the Section. During her stay in Holland, the President was featured twice on television and in a radio interview.

Membership remained stable. In November there was a weekend on H.P. Blavatsky, Theosophy and art, which was well attended, as was the summer weekend on the theme 'The Dynamics of Wisdom'. The national study group on *The Secret Doctrine* is going very well. The Section participated in fairs, displaying its books.

Mrs Ali Ritsema
General Secretary

NEW ZEALAND

It was a major disappointment that the international Vice-President had to cancel her visit due to illness.

An exciting new phase of theosophical activity has begun in Auckland, a new home having been built for the HPB Lodge. This was the venue for a training seminar and a seminar on 'The Creative Mind and the Importance of your Life'. The long-established Thursday afternoon monthly meetings are popular with members who are free during the day. The National President conducted a seminar entitled 'Theosophy, a Way of

Life'. Lodge committee members hold regular meetings at the headquarters at which administrative matters are discussed. These meetings provide an excellent means of strengthening the work and the bonds between branches. Two new study centres have been established and are thriving.

A bequest from the estate of the late Mr and Mrs Frank and Elsie Wilson made it possible to purchase new computer equipment and a new telephone system. The Section has set up its own web site. The e-mail discussion list of Live Wires has

increased rapidly, with requests to link up from around the world. They have undertaken to provide regular topics for discussion.

There is a theosophical book and video sale and return service for the branches. The nation-wide postal

service continues to benefit out-of-town members.

Two new study centres have been established and are thriving.

Mr Gavin Laurie
General Secretary

NORWAY

In the summer the President and later Miss Joy Mills visited Oslo and conducted public lectures and a seminar. The members are determined to continue to build up the Section. Unfortunately it still proves impossible to find premises for meetings and the library.

Efforts are being made to improve the magazine and also to increase

book sales. It is planned to make some copies of books in Norwegian which are in the Adyar Library and to apply to the Non-English Publication Fund for assistance in publishing Norwegian translations of *The Voice of the Silence* and *Human Regeneration*.

Mr Torstein A. Tobiassen
General Secretary

PHILIPPINES

TS officials were invited to speak at clubs and parent groups and on radio and TV. A new weekly one-hour radio programme called 'Golden Lessons in Living' applied the principles of the Ageless Wisdom. Another weekly radio programme is 'In the Light of Theosophy'.

The Secret Doctrine software has been released. The first version of this software containing the entire *The Secret Doctrine* was released this year, available in five diskettes, which can be loaded in a hard disk and requires 7.5 megabytes plus a Windows environment.

A new TOS building was completed, donated by Mr and Mrs

Donato and Susana Cruz. The TOS received a second Hamis award from the Department of Health. A new two-storey kindergarten building with six classrooms and an assembly hall was inaugurated. It will be called the Besant School. A youth organization called the Golden Link has been formed and two three-day youth camps were held. Parental response has been enthusiastic. The Philippine Department of Education has formally implemented the Peace Education Module jointly with the Peace Centre of the TS. It is designed for use in schools.

Mr Vicente Hao Chin Jr.
General Secretary

PORTUGAL

It was a difficult year for the Section, with continuing repair work at the headquarters, which has proved very expensive. Nevertheless all theosophical anniversaries were commemorated and activities continued thanks to the understanding of the members. Public lectures and symposia

were held once a fortnight and branch meetings every week.

The Section journal, appearing four times yearly, continued with improved contents. It was well received, also outside the Society.

Dr Humberto Alvares da Costa
General Secretary

PUERTO RICO

The Executive Committee established a work plan for the whole year, including the Dominican Republic in the programme. In November and December 1996 the lodges were reorganized, being visited and offered help in all respects. An attempt to contact members who had left the Society was successful to some extent.

Some lectures of outstanding quality were given by members. Attendance was excellent. A course in basic theosophy was held and a study group for young members is to meet on Tuesdays as from 1998. A fifth

seminar of the Caribbean basin is planned, the theme being 'The Theosophical Society Facing the New Millenium'.

Cultural activities were organized with the intention of making Theosophy known in the community. Two seminars were held on astrology. There was a lecture on AIDS and a doctor in pediatrics treated the subject 'The fight for life during the first period of gestation', the focus being on the law of karma during this period.

Mrs Magaly Polanco
General Secretary

SPAIN

Branches did continuous and fruitful work. Four of them purchased apartments for holding meetings, the section headquarters lending financial assistance. Former Study Group Lanu in Palma de Mallorca became a Lodge

at their request. Most of its 13 members are very young.

The gathering formerly known as 'The Iberian Days' is now the Spanish summer school, as agreed with the General Secretary of Portugal. The

magazine *Sophia* has appeared monthly and is well received by members.

A TOS Director has been appointed for Spain.

Miss Maria Carmen Cesar Galante
General Secretary

SRI LANKA

Activities are mainly confined to the TS hall in Colombo. 21 meetings were held during the year. Discussions and talks were recorded on cassettes.

The most significant event of the year was the visit of Mr Vicente Hao Chin Jr, General Secretary of the Philippine Section, who gave a two-day seminar on self-transformation. Arising from this seminar, meditation classes and discussions are being held. With Mr Hao Chin's help, a

programme of a vision of the TS for the next five years has been drawn up. The lodges meet from time to time and intend to take over the programme on self-transformation and the relevant exercises.

The Section continues to assist the Sisters of Providence financially for the welfare of about fifty orphaned and abandoned children.

Mr Melwin Herath
General Secretary

SWEDEN

Meetings for dialogues, discussions or lectures were held regularly every week. Public lectures were arranged by local lodges and study centres on a number of themes.

In July, a summer school was held in Finland, where the President, Mrs Radha Burnier, lectured on 'Rhythm, Balance and Harmony'. The guest speaker at the autumn gathering in Stockholm was Mrs Diana Dunningham Chapotin. The subject of

the spring meeting was 'Words leading into Silence'.

The bookshop and library are open three days a week in the afternoons. Three new pamphlets and several books are being translated. The journal of the Section appears four times yearly. The TOS participates in supporting orphans in Latvia.

Mr Gunnar Larson
General Secretary

SWITZERLAND

The Section continues to be active, with courses and seminars, the overall objectives being to centre

work and to suggest a way to apply theosophical concepts to everyday life.

A major concern is to show the public, the press and the authorities that the Society is a free forum for discussion and expression, exploring the field of spirituality, it being necessary to demonstrate that members of the Society are all equal

and forthcoming and that we have no master or guru and no financial interest but to cover our own expenses. The Society does not wish to be considered a sect.

Mr Edwin Nathan
General Secretary

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The most notable development this year was the establishment of a non-local National Lodge, chartered by the national Board and the international President. It began functioning at the beginning of 1997 and is now the largest lodge in the section. Half its members are former members-at-large, the balance consisting of affiliated members with primary membership elsewhere. The Young Theosophist movement has been reborn, with an active group meeting at Olcott and a corresponding group around the country.

The 1997 annual meeting and summer school on the theme 'Religion and the Wisdom Tradition' featured Mr Robert Ellwood who gave the Founders' Address and a public talk as well as a course lasting a week. A variety of speakers conducted courses and gave lectures at headquarters. Attendance at public programmes was approximately 4000 in all. Two programmes a year are offered under the Elder Hostel organization in Boston.

The Field Work Department arranged 104 programmes, with an estimated audience of 4690. A series of letters is sent to all new members in

the first six months of their membership. The studies in *The Key to Theosophy* as printed in the magazine are being prepared as a study course.

The name of the national library has been changed to 'Henry S. Olcott Memorial Library' to clarify its identity and purpose. It circulated 5706 items and 336 volumes were added. The Archives are being reorganized and some interesting items have been unearthed.

The two main periodicals have undergone significant changes this year. *The American Theosophist* has been combined with *The Quest*, with the latter title, appearing monthly. The editor of *Quest* reports that reader response to the changes has been encouraging.

A new edition in the 'Wisdom Tradition Series' is *The Peopling of the Earth* by Mr Geoffrey Barborka and there has been a revised edition of an introductory study course on Theosophy. A number of new books were published and 43 new audio titles were produced. The Olcott Bookshop stocks 21,706 items of merchandise and fills special orders on request.

The Eternal Quest TV series of 18 programmes was made available without charge to cable TV stations around the country. The Section's web

page is frequently revised and augmented.

Dr John Algeo
National President

URUGUAY

Regular public meetings were held as well as study groups. The anniversaries of the Society were commemorated. A number of Young Theosophists have formed a group; some of them visited Chile. The Section's radio programme now has opening and closing music and is very popular.

Membership at 74 represents an increase of 8. A survey was organized on members' impressions regarding their relationship to the Society and

the Society's to the world and what work they as members could offer the Society. There was a 10% response.

The TS in Argentina has offered the Section space in their magazine as they cannot afford to issue a newsletter, although a mini-newsletter has been created.

The TOS conducted the Healing Ritual and the Peace Circle.

Mrs Mercedes F. de Buscarons
General Secretary

REPORTS OF REGIONAL SECRETARIES

AMERICA, CENTRAL

No report

CANADA

Work continues regularly, despite occasional bad weather, and a strong and positive forward movement is evident. Membership stands at 99 with six lodges and centres.

Miss Joy Mills visited Canada in November and gave a public talk entitled 'In Search of the Timeless' and a workshop on meditation and discipleship.

The Lightbearer, the official journal, continues to be well regarded and is considered to be constantly

improving in substance. The TOS is a most welcome presence in Canada.

Mrs Elizabeth Smith
Regional Secretary

IRELAND, NORTHERN

Mrs Helen Gething was a most welcome guest speaker. The highlight of the meeting held with her was the presentation of the Subba Row medal to the son of Dr Hugh Shearman who received it on behalf of his father, since the latter could not be present due to illness.

During the year there were lectures

on Theosophy on Sundays, with comprehensive talks and discussions. Members' meetings were also held once a week. Books studied were *The Science of Yoga*, the teachings of Ramana Maharshi and *The Mahatma Letters*.

Mr John Doherty
Regional Secretary

IVORY COAST

A new Regional Secretary was elected following the death of Mr Mebiana.

The lodges hold courses and study meetings. There was a training seminar in the provinces in August. In April the TS was invited to speak about Theosophy on the radio, which resulted in many telephone calls, about 50 letters and two new

members.

The library, being very small, is little used. However, a gift of about 20 books was received from France. The bi-monthly magazine *Sophia* is issued regularly.

Clothes were collected for the needy.

Mr Pierre-Magloire Kouahoh
Regional Secretary

SCOTLAND

The Convention in Stirling was well attended, each lodge being represented and a sizeable number of unattached members being present. The highlight of the Convention was the presentation to Margaret Senior of

a volume of *The Mahatma Letters* in token of members' appreciation of her sterling work as President Representative.

The lodges have maintained stable membership with extensive

programmes: study groups, workshops and public lectures, which presented mainstream theosophy and related topical concerns. The lodge premises

in Glasgow have been transferred to the ownership of the TS in Scotland.

Mr Walter Roy
Regional Secretary

SLOVENIA

The lodges in Ljubljana and Koper include younger members who are quite active. Lodge members are active and in harmony, with good will to work, true to the TS and its Founders. *The Key to Theosophy*, *Self-Culture* and *Man, God and the Universe* formed the basis for study. In Ljubljana the lectures given at the German Summer School in Weimar were also studied. Studies were prepared two months in advance, the subjects mostly being chosen by members, who prepared translations where necessary.

This year there were two issues of the magazine *Theosophical Thought*, supported by a subsidy from the income from books sold. An effort is being to make the magazine accessible to the largest number of people possible. Old copies are distributed free of charge to the public.

Summer schools were held in Ljubljana and in Koper. The participation of the Vice-President was highly appreciated. Mr Hans Nickl from Austria and Mr Laszlo Reicher from Hungary also took part.

Dr Cveta Staric
Regional Secretary

TOGO

Members are working in several groups throughout the country. Meetings are based on group discussions with a view to living Theosophy in daily life. Theosophy was studied from books in French, e.g. French translations of *At the Feet of*

the Master and *The Voice of the Silence*. Courses were held on how to overcome the three types of karma.

Two seminars were held in May and August in the theosophical centre Danya N'Digbe.

Mr Dam Tsowu
Regional Secretary

WALES

There are two lodges, one in Cardiff and one in Colwyn Bay—at opposite ends of Wales, across two

hundred miles of mountainous ways (the Regional Secretary residing in the middle of the country!). It is

understandable that no joint programmes can be organized. But there was some interchange of speakers between Bristol lodge and Cardiff, and there was a similar arrangement between Colwyn Bay and Manchester.

Cardiff lodge maintains a regular programme of studies and public meetings. As many as 30 attend the Sunday evening lectures. Some of those attending come regularly but do not wish to join the TS.

At Colwyn Bay a conscientious couple have for some years been doing their best to maintain the lodge. No younger people seem to be showing interest. The building is in urgent need of repair and it has been agreed between Colwyn Bay lodge and the English Section (which is also concerned) that the property will be sold, the proceeds being placed in a fund for a future building in the same town.

Mrs Ingrid Eberhard-Evans
Regional Secretary

REPORTS OF PRESIDENTIAL REPRESENTATIVES

ASIA, SOUTH-EAST

During the last four years work in the area has shown a steady and marked all-round improvement. Membership has increased by 40% from 144 to 202.

A study centre in Bakri, South Malaysia, was authorized and an application to form a new lodge in Chittagong Township has been forwarded. Selangor lodge has been doing very well under the leadership of Mrs Padma Narayanan, who worked hard to organize the Indo-Pacific Conference. The lodge holds weekly study classes on the *Bhagavad-Gita* and theosophical books. A study

course on *The Mahatma Letters* was started and a seminar on self-transformation was conducted by Mr Vicente Hao Chin Jr. Sanskrit classes are also held. The lodge at Penang holds fortnightly meetings.

Both lodges in Bangladesh have reported regular meetings, including public meetings. Singapore lodge is functioning well, as in the past. An important event was its move to new premises. Steps are in progress to start a group of young members in Hong Kong.

Dr C. V. Agarwal
Presidential Representative

BOLIVIA

Summer gatherings were held in Cochabamba and La Paz, conducted

by Mr Juan Carlos Palmeri and Mr Ulisses Riedel de Resende on

The Secret Doctrine.

Regular activities include weekly study of *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy* and *The Mahatma Letters*. The important theosophical anniversaries were celebrated. The library and bookshop is open on

study days. TOS work—the care of animals, ecology and help to the needy—continues. The work proceeds satisfactorily.

Mrs Teresa W. de Nunez
Presidential Representative

COSTA RICA

The groups are studying *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Masters and the Path* and *Self-Culture* and the theory and practice of meditation. During Easter week the objects of study were the objectives and work of the Society and what it means to be a member. Six public lectures were held on a variety of theosophical subjects and the anniversaries of the Society were celebrated.

Two radio stations and a TV channel offer space for programmes

on reincarnation, karma, evolution and other questions.

There was an exhibition of oil paintings by Mr Tomas Povedano (founder of the TS in Costa Rica) including portraits of H. P. Blavatsky, Annie Besant, C. W. Leadbeater and J. Krishnamurti. A Round Table group is being organized.

Mr Jaime Hernandez Hostaller
Presidential Representative

DENMARK

During the past year there were 12 public lectures. Among the topics were the 'The Theosophical Emblem', 'HPB and the Way', 'Thought-Power', 'Theosophy Today' and 'Natural Science vs. Spiritual Science'.

The White Lotus Lodge holds regular meetings twice a month on *The*

Secret Doctrine and a study group on *The Key to Theosophy*. Lectures are advertised in the newspapers and mentioned on the local radio.

Mrs Edel Scharstein
Presidential Representative

HUNGARY

A study of Annie Besant's *The Ancient Wisdom* was completed and other theosophical literature was also

studied. To support their meditations, each member received a copy of a corrected translation of *Daily*

Meditations, Extracts from Letters from the Masters, a collection of inspiring aphorisms.

Internet connection has been established.

The Presidential Representative was invited to lecture on relations between Theosophy, Anthroposophy and spiritualism, followed by lively questions and answers. He visited several groups in various parts of Hungary and attended some meetings in other countries.

The first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* and two small booklets by C. Jinaradasa were reprinted. Many books were received from the library of the Hungarian spiritualists.

In February there was a TV programme in memory of Prof Karoly Zipernowsky, a Hungarian inventor, who was one of the first members of the Hungarian TS and helped to organize the TS in Hungary.

Mr Laszlo Reicher
Presidential Representative

IRELAND, REPUBLIC OF

A new set of Dublin Lodge rules has been formulated and approved by the solicitor, and now new trustees will be appointed. There are weekly talks, also of a general nature, on a theosophical subject and on yoga. A good programme has been set up for the coming year.

A stand has been taken at the Mind, Body and Spirit Exhibition in Dublin and it is hoped to sell books, tapes and videos. Much money is being spent on advertisement, with some success.

Mrs Win Woods
Presidential Representative

PAKISTAN

Karachi lodge completed 100 years of its existence on 21 December 1996. Special preparations were made months in advance. The lodge premises and the library were improved. Gifts of books were received from overseas and many letters of good will. The Inter-

national President visited Karachi and Hyderabad, delivering public lectures.

Karachi Lodge observed the theosophical anniversaries and held weekly study classes on various theosophical subjects.

Mrs Gool K. Minwalla
Presidential Representative

PERU

The lodges studied *The Astral Body* and *The Etheric Double* by Arthur

Powell, *Esoteric Christianity* and a variety of theosophical subjects.

Training courses were conducted. All members received translations of *On the Watch-Tower* from *The Theosophist*. The new group in Miraflores worked very well and now has nine members. It is hoped that they will form a lodge in the near future.

There were three public study courses and talks on 'The Magic of

Thought', 'Esotericism of the Andean Culture' and 'The Mystery of the Serpent Fire', all of which were well attended. Mr Alfredo Puig gave an excellent lecture on 'The Three Truths'.

The Library was reorganized.

Mr Julio Gerardo Pomar
Presidential Representative

RUSSIA

There are 16 fellows-at-large in Russia and 8 in the Ukraine and three study groups in Magnitogorsk, one in Moscow and two in Dnepropetrovsk.

Two seminars were conducted by the Chairman of the European Federation, Miss Tran-Thi-Kim-Dieu, one of them together with Mrs Nano Leguay on 'Psychology and the Real Nature of Man' and another with Ms Marja Artamaa on 'Building Together a New Society with Theosophy'. A group of young members conducted a three-day seminar on 'Steps to Self-Knowledge', parts of which were televised.

Eleven members from Russia and the Ukraine took part in the President's seminar at the International Theosophical Centre in Naarden on 'Spiritual Preparation for Practical Action'.

Five thousand copies of *Foundations of Esoteric Philosophy* and of *Human Regeneration - A Study Paper* were printed in Russian. The book of Mr S.S Varma, *Yogic Practices, Yama and Niyama* is being translated into Russian.

Mrs Nina Veligon
Presidential Representative

VENEZUELA

Lodges held regular meetings and study courses. Efforts are being made to strengthen lodges and study groups and to extend activities to other cities. The anniversaries of the Society were commemorated. The 44th anniversary of the foundation of the TS in Venezuela was celebrated in a

'theosophical week' held in September.

Three meditation workshops for beginners were organized at the headquarters in Caracas and two in San Juan de los Morros, all well attended by the general public. With the support of the Inter-American

Federation and Mr Alfredo Puig, a cycle of public lectures and special activities was held. Several visits were made to the city of Valencia to contact the group there and encourage them to rejoin the Society.

With the help of a new member, the

presentation of the magazine was improved, so that it can now be sold to the public.

The Round Table and recreational activities for children were held regularly.

Miss Mariela Lasso Salas
Presidential Representative

REPORTS OF FEDERATIONS

EUROPEAN FEDERATION

Several countries were privileged to have the President as guest of honour at conventions, seminars and summer schools, above all the Dutch Section, which was celebrating its centenary. Priority was given to supporting work in new areas. Working groups met regularly in Magnitogorsk. Seminars and meetings in Moscow and Dnetropetrovsk met with growing interest. In Slovenia work proceeds well; the international Vice-President participated in the summer school. In Hungary, the

President appointed a successor to the former Presidential Representative. A few contacts were made with Poland and Rumania. Efforts were made to establish contacts in Bulgaria.

Many fellows-at-large and sympathizers from Eastern Europe attended the summer seminar conducted by the international President at the Naarden centre in Holland.

Miss Tran-Thi-Kim-Dieu
Chairman

INDO-PACIFIC FEDERATION

The Federation held its triennial conference in Kuala Lumpur, with the theme 'The Universal Law of Harmony'. About 76 delegates registered from 11 countries. The guest speakers were the President and Miss Joy Mills. The conference was very successful and was reported in several Malaysian newspapers. The President of the Federation was re-

elected; the Vice-President being Mrs Beverley Champion of Australia.

The Federation President visited five member-countries, holding two-day seminars on 'Self-Transformation'. He also discussed with the officers the planning of theosophical work to make it relevant to the problems of individuals and society in their countries. Mrs

Champion and Mr Don Fern visited Pakistan and gave a series of lectures and seminars which met with tremendous response from the public. Members of the Indian Section in Calcutta have been assisting theosophical work in Bangladesh, which has led to the formation of a new lodge in Chittagong.

Dr Agarwal has been communicating with members in Myanmar but, due to the political situation, no public activities could be undertaken.

Mr Vicente Hao Chin Jr.
President

INTER-AMERICAN FEDERATION

No report.

REPORTS OF LODGES ATTACHED TO ADYAR

BANGLADESH

There are two Lodges in this country, Comilla Lodge and Kusum Lodge. At present 'Comilla' Lodge has 33 members. Its aim is to create interest in theosophy among educated young people. As a result, about 15% of the members are below 20. On Sundays 35 meetings were held with selected speakers on different aspects of Theosophy followed by question and answer sessions.

The lodge has a library rich in theosophical works, books having been received from the International headquarters, the Indo-Pacific Federation, the Indian Section and the Bengal Federation. The President, Mrs Radha Burnier, and others have been invited to visit the lodge.

Ven. Principal Dharma
Rakshit Mahathers
President of Comilla Lodge

ISRAEL

Members' meetings were held at Covenant Lodge every second week, the subject of study being *The Key to Theosophy* and discussion of the ways in which theosophical principles

can be taught. Two seminars, five introductory courses and four meditation courses were held, with an average of 20 participants. The visit by the Vice-President in

September was much enjoyed. Although membership is only 47, the mailing list includes about 1300 sympathizers. A new category of semi-members, a 'Circle of Friends of the TS', has been introduced.

Public gatherings were held every month, subjects being presented by three speakers, each with a different point of view. These evenings have become very popular, with up to 120

participants, many of them non-members. Monthly excursions for study and meditation to quiet places in the mountains or desert continued. Up to 50 members and non-members participate in those activities. A new Hebrew edition of *The Key to Theosophy* was published.

Mr Abraham Oron
President of Covenant Lodge

JAPAN

Regular meetings were resumed in Nippon Lodge, Tokyo. Younger members are conducting the meetings, creating an atmosphere in which all members feel comfortable in expressing their views. Osaka Lodge has increased its activities and one member offered premises and other facilities. Nagoya Lodge is dormant.

Publications included a book of W.Q. Judge's articles to mark the centenary of his death and a book of short stories by H.P.B. Other publications are planned. The number of serious members is increasing and the work is going forward.

Mr Jeff Clark
President of Nippon Lodge

KOREA

The Lodge in Seoul has been active with regular programmes consisting of lectures and discussions. Although it is a small group, representatives have participated in three successive International Conventions at Adyar. An invitation has been extended to the

International President to visit Korea in the hope that some expansion can be achieved. A very modest amount of Theosophical literature is available in Korean.

Mr Anthony K. Kang
President of Korea Lodge

DIRECTORY

AND

MINUTES

OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

DIRECTORY

Ex-Officio Members of the General Council

President: Mrs Radha Burnier
Vice-President: Miss Mary Anderson
Secretary: Mr Conrad A. Jamieson
Treasurer: Mr D.K. Govindaraj

National Societies, Regional Associations and Presidential Agencies

Date of Formation	Name of Section	General Secretary	Address
1947	Africa, East & Central	Mr H.G. Devani	...PO Box 22385, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania
1909	Africa, Southern	Mr T.G. Davis	...22 Buffels Rd., Rietondale 0084, Pretoria
1956	Africa, Western	Mr P.B. Kwakyi	...POBox 720, Accra, Ghana
1929	America, Central*	Mr José Roberto Hernandez	...A. P. 05-109 San Salvador, El Salvador
1920	Argentina	Mr Jorge Cesano	...Rivadavia 533 2200 San Lorenzo, Santa Fe
1990	Asia, South East	Dr C.V. Agarwal	...The Theosophical Society, Varanasi 221 010, India
1895	Australia	Mrs Beverley Champion	...4th Fl., 484 Kent St., Sydney, NSW 2000
1912	Austria	Mr Franz Durkowsch	...Altmühlweg 5/6, A-4810, Gmunden
1911	Belgium	Dr H. van der Hecht	...166 Rue de la Cambre, 1200 Brussels
1965	Bolivia†	Mrs Teresa W. de Nuñez	...Casilla de Correo 3911, Cochabamba
1920	Brazil	Mr Ulisses Riedel de Resende	...Sociedade Teosofica no Brazil, SGAS Quadra 603, No.20, CEP70200-630 Brasilia (DF)
1924	Canada*	Mrs Elizabeth Smith	...PO Box 123, Wellington, Ont., KOK 3L0
1920	Chile	Mr Maximiliano Aguilera	...Casilla 3603, Santiago
1937	Colombia	Mr Jesus Antonio Rojas	...Cra. 6, No. 56-40, Bogota-2
1997	Costa Rica†	Mr Jaime Hernandez Hostaller	...Apdo 2986-1000 San Jose
1905	Cuba	Dra Lelia Fernandez Pagola	...Lombillo 634, Apartado de Correos 6365, La Habana 10600
1918	Denmark†	Mrs Edel Scharstein	...Kobmagergade 65, 2.th., 1150-Copenhagen K.
1888	England	Miss Lilian Storey	...50 Gloucester Place, London W1H 4EA
1907	Finland	Mrs Kirsti Elo	...Vironkatu 7c2, 00170, Helsinki
1899	France	Mme Danielle Audoin	...4 Square Rapp, 75007 Paris
1902	Germany	Ger Baron v.d. Osten-Sacken	...Freiligrath-Ring 6, D-40878 Ratingen
1928	Greece	Mr P. Anagnostou	...25 Voukourestiou St., 106 71-Athens
1907	Hungary†	Mr Laszlo Reicher	...Bajcsy-Zsilinszky ut 51, H-1065 Budapest
1921	Iceland	Mr Jon Arnalds	...PO Box 1257 Ingolfstraeti 22, 121 Reykjavik
1891	India	Mr M.P. Singhal	...The Theosophical Society, Varanasi 221 010
1912	Indonesia	Mr H.M. Soesiswo	...Jalan Oto Iskandardinata III/G. 336, Jatinegara, Jakarta 13340, Timur
1949	Ireland, Northern*	Mr John Doherty	...30, Hillsborough Drive, Off Woodstock Rd., Belfast BT6 9DS

1919	Ireland, Rep. of	Mrs W. Woods	...31 Pembroke Road, Dublin 4
1902	Italy	Mr Antonio Girardi	...Corso S. Felice e S. Fortunato 256, 36100 Vicenza
1991	Ivory Coast*	Mr Pierre-Magloire Kouahoh	...23 BP, 3924 Abidjan 23, W. Africa
1919	Mexico	Ms Lissette Arroyo Jimenez	...Ignacio Mariscal 126 Col. Tabacalera C.P. 06470 Mexico 1, D.F.
1897	Netherlands, The	Ms Ali Ritsema	...Tolstraat 154, 1074 VM Amsterdam
1896	New Zealand	Mr Gavin Laurie	...18, Belvedere Street, Epsom, Auckland 3
1913	Norway	Mr Torstein A. Tobiassen	...PO Box 2889, Toyen 0608 Oslo 6
1948	Pakistan†	Mrs Gool K. Minwalla	...Jamshed Memorial Hall, M.A. Jinna Road, Karachi
1924	Peru†	Mr Julio Gerardo Pomar	...Jr. Republic de Portugal 152, Brena, Lima-5, S. America
1933	Philippines, The	Mr Vicente Haó Chin, Jr.	...Corner P. Florentino and Iba Streets, Quezon City
1921	Portugal	Dr Humberto Alvares da Costa	...Campo Martires da Pátria 69, r/c-Dto., 1150 Lisboa
1925	Puerto Rico	Mrs Magaly Polanco	...GPO Box 36-1766, San Juan, 00936-1766
1994	Russia †	Mrs Nina Veligon	...Pereulok Soviet House 4 Flat 556, 455036 Magnitogorsk
1910	Scotland*	Mr Walter Roy	...28 Great King St., Edinburgh EH3 6QH
1992	Slovenia*	Dr (Mrs) Cveta Staric	... Celovska Cesta 99 B, SLO -1000 Ljubljana
1921	Spain	Miss Maria Carmen Cesar Galante	...Virgen de Iciar 15 - 1º A, 28220 Madrid
1926	Sri Lanka	Mr Melwin Herath	...24/A Shady Grove Av., Colombo 8
1895	Sweden	Mr G. Larson	...Stroemkarlsvaegen 84, S-167 62 Bromma
1910	Switzerland	Mr Edwin Nathan	...9, Avenue Eugene-Pittard, 1206, Geneva
1997	Togo*	Mr M. Dam Tsowu	...BP 215, Atakpame, W. Africa
1886	USA	Dr John Algeo	...PO Box 270, Wheaton, IL 60189-0270
1925	Uruguay	Ms Mercedes F. de Buscarons	...Javier Barrios Amorin 1085 Casilla de Correos 1553, Montevideo
1953	Venezuela†	Miss Mariela Lasso Salas	...Calle 116 No. 11-09 Apto. 501 Santafe de Bogota, Colombia, S. America
1922	Wales*	Mrs I. Eberhard-Evans	...206 Newport Road, Cardiff CF2 1DL, UK

**The Council of the European Federation
of National Societies:**

Chairman:

Miss Tran-Thi-Kim-Dieu, 67 Rue des Pommiers,
45000 Orleans, France

Inter-American Theosophical Federation:

President:

Mr Ulisses Resende, SGAS Quadra 603, No.20
(CEP-70200-630), Brasilia (DF) Brazil

Indo-Pacific Theosophical Federation:

President:

Mr V. Haó Chin, Jr., Corner P. Florentino
and Iba Streets, Quezon City, The Philippines

* Regional Association

† Presidential Agency

Additional Members of the General Council

Mrs Norma Y. Sastry, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India
(for 1995, 1996 and 1997)

Miss Tran Thi Kim Dieu, 67 Rue des Pommiers, 45000 Orleans, France (for 1995,
1996 and 1997)

Mr Guido Haas, International Theosophical Centre, Valkeveenselaan 19, 1411 GT
Naarden, the Netherlands (for 1995, 1996 and 1997)

Mr Surendra Narayan, X-7 Haus Khas, New Delhi 110 016, India (for 1996, 1997
and 1998)

Miss Joy Mills, 22 Krotana Hill, Ojai, CA 93023, USA (for 1996, 1997 and 1998)

Mr Curt Berg, Sparrisbacken 63, S-165, Hasselby, Sweden (for 1996, 1997 and
1998)

Miss Ianthe Hoskins, 37 Victoria Hill Road, Hextable, Swanley, Kent BR8 7LL,
England (for 1996, 1997 and 1998)

Mr S.S. Varma, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India (for
1996, 1997 and 1998)

Dr Hugh Shearman, 623 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4 3LQ, U.K. (for
1996, 1997 and 1998)

Mr Gabriel Burgos Suarez, Transversal 19, No. 61-32 Bogota-2, Colombia (South
America) (for 1997, 1998 and 1999)

Mrs Linda Harris, 484 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia (for 1997, 1998
and 1999)

MINUTES

***Of the meeting of the General Council of the Theosophical Society held on
Thursday, 25 December 1997, at Adyar***

PRESENT

Mrs Radha Burnier	<i>President (in the chair) and proxy for Belgium, Switzerland and Uruguay</i>
Miss Mary Anderson	<i>Vice-President and proxy for Germany, Greece, Puerto Rico, Mr Curt Berg and Miss Ianthe Hoskins</i>
Mr Conrad Jamieson	<i>Secretary and proxy for West Africa, Mexico, New Zealand and Mr Gabriel Burgos</i>
Mr D.K. Govindaraj	<i>Treasurer</i>
Mrs Beverley Champion	<i>General Secretary, Australia, and proxy for Ms Linda Harris</i>
Mr Melwin Herath	<i>General Secretary, Sri Lanka</i>
Dr John Algeo	<i>General Secretary, U.S.A., and proxy for Colombia</i>
Miss Joy Mills	<i>Additional Member and proxy for Brazil, Finland, Indonesia and The Netherlands</i>
Mr Surendra Narayan	<i>Additional Member and proxy for Mr S.S. Varma</i>
Miss Tr��n-Thi-Kim-Di��u	<i>Additional Member and proxy for Argentina, France, Italy, Portugal and Spain</i>

Present by invitation as Observers:

Dr C.V. Agarwal	<i>Presidential Representative for South-East Asia</i>
Mr Arthur Goodall	<i>Assistant General Secretary, New Zealand</i>
Mr Gaspar Torres Martinez	<i>Assistant General Secretary, Cuba</i>
Mr Paul Zwollo	
Mrs Wies Kuiper	

The President warmly welcomed the members attending the General Council and the observers present.

The list of proxies was read out as recorded above.

1. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held at Adyar on 25 December 1996, which had already been circulated, were confirmed and signed.

2. Matters arising out of the Minutes

(a) *Greece*

For many years the Greek Section has not collaborated with Adyar (not sending reports, dues etc. or adapting their National Rules to the International Rules and communicating only irregularly). On 2 February 1997, the Section cancelled the Charter of the Blavatsky Lodge in Athens and the Lodge appealed to the President against such cancellation. The President asked Mr Peter Barton and Dr C.T. Phan to conduct an official enquiry, which they held in Athens in September 1997. After considering the reports of the enquiry officers, the President took the view that there was not enough justification for the cancellation of the Charter of the Blavatsky Lodge by the Greek Section. The matter was discussed in detail in the General Council and the Council agreed with the President that the Charter of the Blavatsky Lodge should be restored.

The General Council expects the Greek Section to create harmony within the Section, to cooperate with the International Society and to adopt Rules which are not incompatible with those of the International Society.

(b) *Mr Farthing's Manifesto*

Mr Farthing had circulated a 'Supplement 1997' to his 1996 Manifesto. The Vice-President, Miss Mary Anderson, read a passage from a letter from Miss Ianthe Hoskins, for whom she was acting as proxy, in which Miss Hoskins expressed her support for Mr Farthing. After careful consideration, the General Council confirmed that there is no reason to depart from the view it had taken at its meeting in December 1996, which is reproduced below for ready reference:

The consensus was that freedom of thought necessarily implies a wide horizon of thought and perception. Belief that the writings of H.P.B. and the Mahatma Letters constitute the only source of the message the T.S. should promulgate cannot be imposed on members, as such limitation goes against the grain of that freedom of thought. Each one must have the freedom to decide what best helps understanding of oneself and provides inspiration to work for the ideal of human progression and perfection.

(c) *Hungary*

There was a discussion in July 1997 at the European Council Meeting in Naarden about why there are no lodges in Hungary, although there are almost 40 members. Since then, Mr Laszlo Reicher has resigned as Presidential Representative and been replaced by Mr Thomas Martinovitch.

(d) World Congress, Sydney, 2001

The Australian General Secretary gave details of plans for the World Congress in 2001. The venue would be Sydney Convention Centre at Darling Harbour, situated centrally in the city. Two university residences, motels and a youth hostel would be available nearby for accommodation. It was decided to open the Congress on the evening of 12 January and to close it at noon on 19 January, with a free afternoon on the 16. Speakers will be decided upon later.

3. Confirmation of Voting

(a) Election of Additional Members for the years 1998, 1999 and 2000

The President had nominated Mr Paul Zwollo and Mr K. Visvanathan under Rule 2(b) of the Rules and Regulations as Additional Members of the General Council.

The result of the voting was:

	<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Total</i>
Mr Paul Zwollo	36	—	36
Mr K. Visvanathan	36	—	36

The two above named were declared elected as Additional Members of the General Council for the years 1998, 1999 and 2000.

(b) Re-election of Additional member for the years 1998, 1999 and 2000

The President had nominated Miss Trần-Thi-Kim-Diêu under Rule 2(b) of the Rules and Regulations for re-election as an Additional member of the General Council.

The result of the voting was:

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Abstained</i>	<i>Total</i>
34	1	1	36

Miss Trần-Thi-Kim-Diêu was declared re-elected as an Additional member of the General Council for the years 1998, 1999 and 2000.

4. Report of the Non-English Publications Fund Committee

The Vice-President reported that there had been no grants during the year ended 30 September 1997. However, two Applications are being processed.

The following were appointed members of the Committee for the years 1998, 1999 and 2000:

President of the T.S.	<i>Chairman</i>
Vice-President of the T.S.	<i>Vice-Chairman</i>
Mr Curt Berg	
Miss Joy Mills	
Mr Alfredo Puig	

5. Report of the International Finance Committee

The Vice-President presented the report of the International Finance Committee for the year ended 30 September 1997.

The following were appointed members of the Committee for the years 1998, 1999 and 2000:

President of the T.S.
Vice-President of the T.S.
Treasurer of the T.S.
Mr Surendra Narayan

6. Report of the Executive Committee for the year ended 30 September 1997

Salient points from the minutes of the Executive Committee were presented.

The following were appointed members of the Executive Committee for 1998:

Mrs Radha Burnier	<i>President</i>)	
Miss Mary Anderson	<i>Vice-President</i>)	
Mr Conrad Jamieson	<i>Secretary</i>	)	<i>Ex-officio</i>
Mr D.K. Govindaraj	<i>Treasurer</i>)	
Mr Surendra Narayan	<i>General Council Member</i>		
Mr K. Visvanathan	<i>General Council Member</i>		
Mrs Norma Sastry			
Mr R.M. Tolani			

7. Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 1997

The Treasurer's report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 1997, which had previously been circulated, were considered. It was noted that the overall financial position of the Society continued to be satisfactory. The report and accounts were adopted.

8. Budget for the year ending 31 March 1999

The budget for the year ending 31 March 1999, which had been previously circulated, was considered and adopted.

9. Auditors for the year ending 31 March 1999

Messrs Fraser and Ross were appointed auditors of the Theosophical Society for the year ending 31 March 1999, and their fees fixed at Rs.25,000/-, an increase of Rs.5,000/- over the previous amount.

10. Proposal of the General Secretary of the Australian Section to substitute 'humanity' or 'human being' for the word 'man' in the Third Object of the T.S.

Miss Ianthe Hoskins had written expressing her objection to this proposal. The relevant part of her letter was read out by her proxy.

It was explained that in certain countries, such as the U.S.A. and Australia, there was widespread public feeling against 'sexist language'. The use of the masculine noun 'man' to refer to a human being, as in the case of the Third Object, creates ill-will against the Society.

It was agreed that the wording of the Three Objects of the International Theosophical Society shall stand as it is — unchanged. Any attempt to change the wording of the objects would involve considerable complications and might even endanger its legal status as a Society registered in 1905. Individual National Societies may, however, if so moved, change the wording of the Third Object, limited only to replacing the word 'man' by 'human being'. This should be done only after submitting the proposed amendment to the President and obtaining her approval.

11. Work around the World

(a) Membership

The President stated that membership world-wide this year has come back to a total of around 31,000.

(b) Denmark

The President mentioned that Mr Flemming Hansen had been appointed in place of Mrs Edel Scharstein as Presidential Representative in Denmark.

12. Any Other Business

Non-Governmental Organizations

A question was raised as to whether the Theosophical Society had ever applied or should apply to be an NGO attached to the United Nations. It was pointed out that the matter had been investigated previously and it had been ascertained that this would involve the Society in restrictions which would not be acceptable.

